

THE FINE ARTS ANNUAL OF PURDUE CALUMET

Skylark

15th Issue
1986 Edition



Carleen Zygoras '85

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SKYLARK, since its birth in 1972, has evolved into one of the finest university literary magazines. SKYLARK's success is attributed to the dedication of its staff, the generous support of the university and community, and the willingness of artists to share their talents.

In this edition I am honored to include a special section written by Vietnam Veterans. I would like to thank the veterans for their overwhelming response and willingness to share their thoughts and talents with us.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Professor Charles Tinkham for his enthusiasm and support. His dedication to SKYLARK is vital to its success.

Last, but most certainly not least, I would like to thank my staff for their hard work and dedication to make this fifteenth anniversary edition of SKYLARK a success.

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Judging is being done in the following categories as SKYLARK goes to press: Vietnam Veteran, Poetry, Children, Prose, and Graphics. Winners will be notified within the next four weeks. Names of winners will appear in the next SKYLARK. If you would like a list of winners, please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to SKYLARK, Purdue University Calumet, Hammond, IN 46323.

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GREETINGS!

I am certainly honored to be included as one of the thousands of readers and fans who are in awe of the talent represented in this, your 15th Anniversary Issue of SKYLARK. It is a first-class product of the artistic expression of many, many people, and the dedication and enthusiasm of the students and staff involved with SKYLARK at Purdue Calumet. You are all to be congratulated and thanked.

Northwest Indiana, Hammond especially, is proved to be the home of Purdue Calumet. For forty years the community and the University have exchanged physical, intellectual, and human resources to the benefit of thousands of citizens and students alike, and the contributions of Purdue will affect our society for generations to come.

I join the faculty, the administration and the students in reveling in the growth and accomplishments of our local campus, and wish the same successes in the next forty years.

**Thomas McDermott
Mayor, Hammond, IN**



An Enduring Mission

*Richard J. Combs, Chancellor
Purdue University Calumet*

All universities are inclined to discuss their histories and their futures in terms of their missions. That characteristic is both logical and desirable, for universities have no reason for existence other than the objectives stated and implied in their statements of mission.

Purdue University Calumet is celebrating 40 years of service and accomplishment during 1986, but to tell the story of Purdue Calumet requires a longer look back than just to 1946.

As early as the 1920s there was a "Purdue presence" in northwest Indiana. A number of classes were offered then in our communities, in store-fronts and other temporary quarters, as part of the extension services of Purdue University. The classes typically were offered for engineers and technologists who were involved in the emerging industrial giant, popularly called the Calumet Region.

Our mission—as defined in those early days by Purdue University—was to provide specialized training for those who were striving to build industrial and economic stability in this area. Several of the companies, and many of the individuals, who profited from the Purdue offerings in those earliest years are still here and still vitally involved. That fact suggests that the mission then was both reasonable and responsible.

The next particularly significant phase of a Purdue presence in our area came with the crisis years of World War II. In the first years of that war Purdue was one of dozens of universities across the country to develop special programs in conjunction with the War Manpower Training Act, an effort to accelerate the process—and greatly increase the productivity—whereby skilled craftsmen and technicians were made available to support a wartime economy.

Our mission—at that time defined both by Purdue University and by a national endeavor of unparalleled scope—was again to provide specialized training for those who could help to build. The production goals were more specialized than had been the case in 1925, but the mission was intact.

The conversion of a wartime production scale to a peacetime production ethic required new thinking as well as new muscle. There was still a demand for technical training as the war effort ended, and that demand led to the creation of several two-year technical institute curricula. Returning veterans wanting to enroll in degree programs caused Purdue to expand its offerings here to include credit courses across the spectrum of the collegiate experience. In establishing credit courses in English, mathematics, life sciences, natural sciences, history, management, engineering, engineering technologies, and speech, Purdue University created a center from which a university would grow.

Our mission in 1946 was to provide the traditionally outstanding educational opportunities of Purdue University to a population which was geographically distant from the campus but which was adjacent to it in terms of intellectual curiosity. From 1925 to 1946 the mission had changed almost not at all; the means whereby the mission was to be accomplished were expanded to reflect the changes in the national realities, but the mission was secure.

The citizens and the leadership of Northwest Indiana reacted with a voracious appetite. Inland Steel was one of the first industrial clients of the newly defined Calumet Center, and in 1950 the first graduates of the Inland Steel Training Program were awarded specialized diplomas by Purdue University. By 1951 there was a campus from which the mission could be addressed and expanded. Millard E. Cyte was the director of the Calumet Center, and he began to refine the process whereby mission could be translated into specific opportunity.

By 1956, an impactful and brief ten years after the decision to continue the Purdue mission in Northwest Indiana, enrollment at the Calumet Center had crossed 2,800 students. Course offerings had been expanded to include more diversity and greater opportunity in all fields, and by 1962 the Technical Institute would become a School of Technology.

The years of planning and building under Millard Cyte ended with his death in 1958. The Calumet Center had a full-time faculty of 30, and a part-time faculty two or three times that size. The mission was intact: to serve the needs of the constituents of the campus as effectively and as completely as possible without deviating from the standards of Purdue University.

Cyte's successor was Carl H. Elliott, under whom the mission was honored as the campus grew in buildings, people, and opportunity. Legislative support for the mission, previously available only indirectly through Purdue West Lafayette, became a direct reality in 1963. Authorization to offer academic programs leading to baccalaureate and master's degrees came in 1965.

The first commencement ceremony at Hammond was held in 1967. The integrity of the mission was intact and the potential for greater accomplishment was clear.

Dr. Elliott left Purdue Calumet in 1974, and in 1975 I became Chancellor. The transition was not a difficult one, for those who had worked to advance our mission under Dr. Elliott were those with whom I continued to

work. Changes, for which the groundwork had been established and enhanced during the preceding decades, came rather quickly. Academic autonomy in the undergraduate degree programs had been achieved in 1974; expansion of student services and student activity programs was implemented; enrollments began a growth cycle that would endure for nearly a decade; new academic programs were added, and existing ones were redefined, to maintain currency and accountability in what had been established as our areas of specialization. Accreditation by national societies and agencies was sought and achieved for all of our major programs during this period of rapid productivity and expansion.

Our mission was intact: we had additional criteria to satisfy and we had new challenges to meet, but we had not lost sight of the single-most important element of our mission.

The Calumet Campus became Purdue University Calumet in 1979. New undergraduate and graduate degree programs were added to the inventory, and we entered an era of rapid growth. The growth was not entirely in people; we learned that "state-of-the-art" is both labor- and cost-intensive. The concerns and challenges of a maturing, full-service institution of higher education became our concerns and challenges. Inflation, fossil-fuel shortages, enrollment increases, teacher shortages, local manpower shortages, state budgetary shortfalls, political intricacies, in-migration; "deflation," fossil-fuel surpluses, enrollment decreases, teacher gluts, high local unemployment, state budgetary adjustments, political wisdom, and out-migration—all have become issues confronting our resolve to preserve the mission of the University.

Our mission has survived, and therefore the University has survived. The mission has been advanced, and therefore the University has grown. The mission continues to be our anchor in the mercuric realities of the decades, and therefore the University is firmly secured as a repository of understanding and information.

The mission of Purdue University Calumet: it is 40 years old, and it is 50 years old, and it is 60 years old, and it is ageless. We celebrate our 40th year as an enduring presence in Northwest Indiana, and in so doing we celebrate the timeless quality of all that is associated with learning, exploration, discovery, and insight.

The mission of Purdue University Calumet: its history is our history, for we have no existence beyond it.

PURDUE UNIVERSITY CALUMET
40th Anniversary Steering Committee
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
(Revised January 13, 1986)

Jan. 21, 1986	UNIVERSITY LECTURE SERIES Astronaut Jerry Ross (3:30–5:00 p.m.)
Jan. 30, 1986	WOMEN'S STUDIES "BROWN BAG" FORUM "Prevention Awareness—Physical Safety"—Detective Linda Lawson

Feb. 7, 1986	GNS DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION SEMINAR
Feb. 13, 1986	WOMEN'S STUDIES "BROWN BAG" FORUM "Parenting"—Prof. Leslie Bonjean
Feb. 14, 1986	HOME COMING
Feb. 14, 1986	UNIVERSITY LECTURE SERIES Senator Richard G. Lugar (8:30–10:00 a.m.)
Feb. 15, 1986	FL&L PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS: Language Expo 86
Feb. 17–21, 1986	NATIONAL ENGINEERING WEEK —JETS/TEAMS Competition —Engineering & Technologies Annual Dinner
Feb. 23, 1986	LOCAL ARTIST RECITAL III The Griffin Ensemble
Feb. 24, 1986	BOOKS & COFFEE III: Lee Zacharias' Lessons
March 12, 1986	WOMEN'S STUDIES "BROWN BAG" FORUM "Transition from the Public to the Private Sector"—Dr. Jean Hasrdy Robinson
March , 1986	CHEM/PHSX ANNIVERSARY WORKSHOP FOR C.A.S.T.
March 28, 1986	ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON AGING
March 29, 1986	ANNUAL MATHEMATICS CONTEST
March 31, 1986	BOOKS & COFFEE IV: John Tuckey's Mark Twain & Little Satan—A Retrospective
April , 1986	HOSPITALITY CAREER AWARENESS DAY
April 6, 1986	ANNUAL SCIENCE FAIR & ART FAIR
April 6, 1986	UNIVERSITY OPEN HOUSE
April 10, 1986	WOMEN'S STUDIES "BROWN BAG" FORUM "Intra-Family Violence"—Betty Jacobson
April 16, 1986	SIGRID STARK LITERARY COMPETITION
April 16, 1986	ALEX HALEY LECTURES
April , 1986	ISCP PROGRAMMING QUADRATHON FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
April 26, 1986	TEACHER DAY ON CAMPUS (Dept. of EDUC)
May 10, 1986	FOUNDERS' DAY ON CAMPUS
May 10, 1986	COMMENCEMENT
May 10, 1986	ALUMNI ANNIVERSARY RECEPTIONS
May 10, 1986	ALUMNI ANNIVERSARY BALL
May 20, 1986	NURSING ALUMNI RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM



Photograph by Karen Luksich

Waiting for Sanchez

The Main highway leading into the north end of town had been blocked by a cattle truck parked at an angle. The truck and the restless steers inside belonged to the mayor's brother whose ranch extended beyond the shimmering mirages in all directions. The silver cab of the truck was nosed against the guard rail so that the only traffic allowed through town was from the north. After the cars of vacationers squeezed around the town police car and behind the tail end of the truck, their occupants stared at the townspeople who were lined up on both sides of Main Street. The faces of the vacationers were olive-colored from the tinted glass of their air-conditioned cars. And when the cars reached the south end of town where the town's fire truck was blocking all north-bound traffic, the heads of the travelers could be seen twisting back, their mouths moving rapidly as in a silent movie.

Mayor Costa, who had been standing outside the entrance of Maria's Diner with a group of old men, began crossing the street after a long Airstream camper pulled by a Lincoln had rolled slowly past, the suspension of the camper squeaking like a ship in a mild swell. One of the old men wearing a white sombrero tried to follow, but the mayor waved him back to join more old men who were coming out of the Desert Bar next door to Maria's. Maria's Diner and the Desert Bar were in the same low building made taller by a fake two-story front that held their neon signs. The signs may have been lit, but the noon sun was too bright to tell.

The mayor removed his volunteer fire department cap—a construction worker's cap painted red—and wiped his brow with his sleeve as he crossed the street. His bald head sparkled in the sun as if he were wearing a smaller version of

the cap. The mayor swayed as he walked, each leg seeming to try to walk beyond the mass of his belly. In his too-tight khaki leisure suit and with the red cap perched on his head like a golf ball on a fat tee, the mayor looked like a World War II MP who had recently removed his uniform from mothballs. His thick left arm was squeezed tight by a white band with "FD" stenciled in red.

The mayor joined the children and teenagers standing in the shade of Sundial Sundries. The sweet smells of tobacco and ice cream drifting into the shade were cool compared to the grease and spilt beer smells of Maria's and the Desert Bar across the street. Salvatori, the owner of the Sundial, a tall skinny man whose hair was as white as vanilla ice cream and whose skin was the color of smoke, pushed through the screen door bumping two adolescent dark-haired boys who were not wearing shirts. The two boys retreated from the door. One boy whispered in the other's ear and the other boy said only, "Sanchez." A group of teenage boys standing on the sidewalk parted slowly as the mayor approached, then regrouped to whistle and screech at a young woman wearing white shorts and a halter who had come out of the store behind Salvatori.

"Get outta the way you kids! Let Mayor Costa through for cry-eye!" Salvatori wiped his hands in his waist apron. "So how long has it been?"

The mayor looked down the sidewalk at the young woman then up the street to where the cattle truck blocked the traffic. "You mean since he drove outta town?"

"Yeah."

"What's the matter, Salvatori? You worried about not sellin' enough double dips to the tourists?"

"Hell no. I just wondered how long you'd block off the street for that hoodlum."

The two dark-haired boys who had been standing next to the door had moved to the entrance and an older boy smoking a cigarette pushed them inside.

Salvatori wheeled about when he heard the screen door slam. "Hey you two! Get out! Go home and put on shirts before you come in my store! Ain't you got no decency?"

The two boys slinked out as if they were one animal. They pointed to the boy smoking a cigarette and tried to speak. But in their dark-brown eyes was the childish fear to speak, to explain the unexplainable to an adult.

"That's it! Get out! Can't you read the sign? No shoes, No shirt, No enter!"

The mayor put his hand on Salvatori's shoulder. "Take it easy. They're just kids."

Salvatori watched the two boys side-step down the sidewalk before he turned around. "Yeah. Just kids. That damn fool Sanchez was just a kid a few years ago. And now he's got the whole damn town stopped up."

The mayor tugged at a chain draped across his gut and pulled out his gold watch. "Not for long. We'll catch him."

"What if he doesn't stop?"

"Well, unless that old Dodge of his sprouts wings he's got to stop. There's twenty tons of steers says he'll stop this time. And them steers is all fattened up for market."

"This time you better lock him up."

"That's up to the police chief and the JP, Salvatori. Anyway, maybe he won't even show up."

"Good riddance if he doesn't. The town would be better off without his kind. Too lazy to get a job, drivin' around town on gas he probably steals. The kid's crazy, always was."

"What makes you think that?"

"Listen, anyone who goes and sleeps on his mother's grave is crazy in my book."

"He only did it once."

"Well that ain't all. The guys over at the Desert Bar tell me he comes in there nights and downs unfinished drinks at the tables. And how come he never wears a shirt? They tell me he wears a tie and jacket sometimes, but no shirt. And now this speedin' through town in that heap of his. You better lock him up before he kills somebody."

Salvatori's wife—short, plump, dressed like a nurse in a white dress and support-hose and cap—came out of the store holding a bottle of Dr. Pepper. Her face was darker than Salvatori's, though she was not Spanish or Italian. "What's all the guff out here?"

Salvatori started back toward the door. "Mayor Costa's been tellin' me how they plan to catch that fool idiot who thinks he's Mario Andretti. I'm goin' back inside before some kid robs us blind."

The mayor removed his cap and held his left hand over his belly as he always did when talking to one of the town's ladies. "Howdy, Irene. Sure is hot, aint it."

She handed the Dr. Pepper to the mayor. "This'll cool you off."

"Why thank you, Irene." He took the bottle and drank half of it in one swig. Then he wiped his mouth with his sleeve and put his cap back on, not straight, tilted to the side, rakish.

In the distance, to the south, horns had begun sounding, first one then others joining in. The fire chief's voice blared on a bull horn, but the words were indistinguishable in the middle of town. The sounding of car horns slowly died out and to the north the cattle could be heard mooing and banging against the sides of the truck.

The mayor finished the Dr. Pepper, handed the bottle back to Irene and pulled out his watch. "He better come pretty soon or I'll have to lift the road block."

Irene leaned forward to look at the watch, her blue eyes opening wider. "How long has it been?"

"Twenty minutes." He put the watch away and folded his arms over his belly. "I'll give him ten more minutes. Then I'll have the truck moved out."

Irene held the cool bottle against her cheek. "Why don't you just let the traffic go around the truck both ways?"

"I'm afraid he'll run into someone, that's why. Damn—beg your pardon, Irene—but we should've impounded that car of his after last week when he ran over the postmaster's dog."

Irene moved the bottle to her other cheek. "But you couldn't do that. Running over a dog isn't a crime."

"Yeah, but drivin' through town at a hundred miles an hour is. That could've been one of these here kids."

"I don't think so. You can hear that car of his a mile off and today I heard him revving the engine on his way out. I think he does it to warn everyone."

"Well, Irene, that doesn't make it all right."

The mayor and Irene stepped in closer to the store's entrance where it was cooler.

"You're his neighbor, Irene. You know him better than anyone else. Why's he doin' this? I mean it'd be just fine with me if he used the open highway. But why does he have to barrel-ass through town this way?"

Irene bent and dropped the empty Dr. Pepper bottle into a case of empties next to the door. When she stood straight she pulled at her bra straps hidden under the white dress. "Well, you know how hard his ma's passing was on him."

"Yeah, but that was over a year ago. And since then he worked at your store for a while."

"Yes, just long enough to buy that car." Irene fluffed her brown hair with her hands. "He wouldn't have lasted long anyhow. Sal hated him."

"How come?"

"Oh, lots of reasons. Sal used to get jealous when he worked in the back room without a shirt on. Sal said he was trying to show off his muscles for me." Irene began rubbing her arms above the elbows, her forearms lifting her bosom. "And then he always wore that St. Christopher's medal around his neck."

"What's wrong with that?"

"Oh, when he'd bend into the ice cream case the medal would fall out of his shirt, because he left most of the buttons undone, and dip into the ice cream. You know Sal; everything's got to be sanitary. Why do you think we moved out into this desert?"

"Why?"

"Less germs."

Car horns started beeping again, only farther away. The fire chief was on the bull horn, his voice still unintelligible.

"Say, Irene?"

"Yes?"

"After this is over do you think you could say something to the boy? The chief can't keep him locked up for more than a couple of days."

"I'll try. But he doesn't talk much except to that car."

"He talks to the car?"

"Sure. I can't hear what he says but while he's washing it I can hear him chattering. It's really strange the way he is around that car. In the evenings he comes out of the house and strokes the fenders as if it were a woman."

The mayor looked toward the blaring car horns then back at the cattle truck. "Yeah, a big brown woman with a four hundred cubic inch engine."

"Maybe if the kids had something to do in this town it would be different." Irene glanced at the children and teenagers around her. "Just look at these kids. Now that school's out there's nothing to do. Can't we open up the dance hall or something?"

"We could, Irene, but who would all these boys dance with? There must be about two young ladies in the whole town and those two are engaged." The mayor glanced down the sidewalk to where the young woman in white shorts and a halter had disappeared. "That's the trouble with this town, Irene. All the young folks move out as soon as they can. The city boys drive in from the north and take off with our girls, and the boys in town just hang around in front of your place till they're old enough to take off on their own."

Irene smiled and touched the mayor's arm. "So all that's left is old fogys like us."

"I may be an old fogy, Irene, but you're not."

Irene adjusted the collar on her dress. "Why thank you, Mr. Mayor."

"My pleasure, Irene." The mayor looked toward the cattle truck. "I guess I better tell the chief to move the truck."

"That would be best. Let the boy blow off some steam. After all, he's one of the few boys who hasn't deserted us. I'll talk to him and get some of the other town ladies to talk to him. And maybe—your being the mayor and all—maybe you could see about a job for him. The ladies' auxilliary has been trying to renovate the cemetery for a long time. We think the town ought to hire Sanchez to do some of the fix-up work. He'd like that, being that his ma's buried there."

"I don't know, Irene. The town council won't be too keen on the idea after this. They're the ones who made me set up this road block in the first place. It was okay when the boy just drove up and down Main Street all day. But after he started speedin' through last week they said I had to do something. The chief gave him two tickets and he didn't even show up at the JP's."

Irene shifted her weight to one leg and rested her hand on her hip as if it were a shelf. "Things get blown all out of proportion living in a small town like this."

"Yeah, maybe they do."

"And everyone knows everyone else's business."

The mayor straightened his cap, pulled it down tight so that the skin at the sides of his head puffed out. "What're you gettin' at, Irene?"

Irene spoke more quietly. "Well, everybody knows Sanchez's ma used to be a maid up at the big house at your brother's ranch years ago."

The mayor pulled out his pocket watch and looked at it. He looked down the street to where car horns were now blaring consistently. Then he looked back to Irene. "Yeah. I know. I know."

"Well then, don't you think the town owes the boy at least a little consideration? Look at it this way, Mr. Mayor. If he gets a job and earns a little money, maybe he can escape like the other boys, go to the city and find himself a nice girl. As it is, he's got nobody here to court except that car of his."

The mayor started toward the edge of town where the cattle truck waited. "I'll think about it, Irene. Maybe he's already took off. But if he comes back and doesn't hurt nobody I'll see what I can do. Right now I gotta get the truck moved out."

Across the street the group of old men began waving as

they moved north on the sidewalk. A sombrero rolled into the street and a man pointed toward the cattle truck as he retrieved it. One of the men shouted, "He's coming!" and others, on both sides of the street joined in.

"He's coming!"

"Sanchez is coming!"

Everyone except Irene began running down the sidewalk. The mayor held his cap down with one hand as he ran. With the other hand he waved teenage boys from his path. One boy tripped and fell into the street. The siren on the fire truck sounded and the car horns stopped. Then all was silent except for the clomping of feet and the mooing of a few steers and a barely perceptible roar to the north. A pickup truck camper was allowed through the road block and it sped through town. A grey-haired woman in the passenger seat held a handkerchief to her mouth as she stared at the mob moving in the opposite direction on the sidewalk.

"He's coming! Stay off the street! You kids stay back!"

But no one could stop the children and teenage boys and men. The whole town, except for a few women standing in doorways, was moving toward the cattle truck. One of the small boys without a shirt ran into the street and was pulled back onto the sidewalk by a teenage boy who grabbed his hair. The roar grew louder, drowning out the shuffling of feet and the mooing of cattle.

The crowds on both sides of the street stopped at the edge of town beyond the ESSO station where the land sloped down into the drainage ditches at both sides of the road. The police chief left his car and climbed over the guard rail. He fell and slid down the embankment sitting down.

The brown Dodge was visible now, had broken free of the shimmer at the horizon and was growing ever larger. Its headlights came on and spread like two yellow eyes in the sun. For a moment the roar of the engine dropped in pitch. But then it began again, louder than before.

"He's gonna crash! He's gonna crash!"

The crowd moved back in a wave. The mayor tripped over a little boy and landed on one knee. His cap fell off and was kicked about by rushing feet.

The impact lifted the side of the cattle truck, moved it several feet. Glass sprayed sparkling up into the sky. The roar of the engine stopped, was replaced by the whines of children and cattle. From beneath the truck there was a thud as if a large boulder had been dropped to the earth. Then the topless Dodge, moving more slowly, emerged from beneath the truck.

The crowd was moving again, running back into town, chasing the Dodge as it careened back and forth off the curbs. The tires were flat, bits of rubber spewing from smoking fender wells. The Dodge stopped in the middle of town, parked at the curb in front of the Post Office, engulfed in steam and smoke. Ahead, the crowd slammed against the store fronts and stopped. The window of the Sundial caved in. The crowd backed up and, between legs and limp arms, could be seen the head of Sanchez lying face up in the gutter. There were two red splotches for eyes, a hole for a nose. The mouth was intact, twin chains from Sanchez's St. Christopher's medal draped from the closed lips. His hair glistened wet as if smeared with Vasoline. Something yellow was oozing from his neck like toothpaste from a red tube. Cattle were bellowing behind the crowd sounding like another crowd screaming.

The mayor ran to the front. "Back up! Everyone get back!"

The fire truck roared up to the Dodge and the volunteers sprayed their fire extinguishers into the car as the old men on the other side of the street pointed. But on the west side of the street in front of the Sundial no one dared go past the head of Sanchez. The mayor kept pushing everyone back until Irene came out of the store with a white towel and, stooping just beyond the shade of the buildings, draped it over the head of Sanchez. And the firemen, seeing this, spread a green tarp over the Dodge.

The crowd was silent. Some stood staring at the head and the car, others went back to where the police chief was sweeping glass from the highway. Two old men carried the twisted roof of the Dodge to the shoulder. And as the cattle truck drove off to the side, children ran alongside pointing to the dent at the lower edge of the trailer. The cattle had again assumed their calm before slaughter, mooing and banging gently against the sides of the trailer.

The traffic, when it resumed, set up a breeze that fluttered the edges of the white towel. The two boys without shirts ran down the sidewalk past the draped head. They made engine sounds and their arms were extended as if to fly. One of the boys fell and cut his hand on glass from the Sundial's window. And the mayor, placing his red cap on the crying boy's head, lifted the boy over the glass and carried him into the store.

The traffic was soon back to normal, a sporadic flow in both directions. The police chief placed a portable "No Parking" sign next to the towel-covered head of Sanchez and the shade of the Sundial stretched beyond the white towel turning it grey. Across the street the cars of travelers began parking at the curb in front of Maria's Diner. It was long past time for lunch.

Michael Beres

That Old Friend of Mine

When life's burden weights
me down

And the future seems so
unkind

Then he comes to my
relief

That good old Friend of
mine.

He has not wealth or riches
But a heart that is good
and kind

And a hand to bear my
burden

That good old Friend of
mine.

He does not count my
faults

But the good in me to find
Which gives me courage
in life's battles

That good old Friend of
mine.

In all candor, I must admit
All the wealth of gold in
a mine

Cannot give comfort and
consolation

Like that good old Friend
of mine.

J. T. McMurray

Your smile
is pleasant—
as gentle lake waves
embracing the lustrous shore.

Your eyes
are glowing—
like the flame-colored
sunset of autumn.

Your laugh
is cheerful—
like the summer song
of the playful blue-jay.

Your friendship
is welcome—
as the birth of spring's first tulip
after winter's isolated death.

Natrona Wilson

Wake Me. . . . Don't!!!

Don't wake me up anymore
I've seen the world by day
I've seen the bitter way
it screams

the
tragic
song

of life
with endless fears of buried wars
and resurrected

time
bombs
:
and

tiny
seeds
of
newborn babes

who face
a hopeless lifelong

Don't
Wake
Me
Up
Anymore

I'd rather see
the darkness
I'd rather face

the unknown unknown

that
kept me up at night time

Don't
Wake
Me
Up

ANYMORE

I've
seen the world by day
I've overdread my stay

Sylvia G. Nava

Rain falls softly
Tapping on the window pane
The gentleness
Of a rainy night.

Have you ever
Watched it—
The patterns
On the glass—
And listened
To the silence
Of the night?

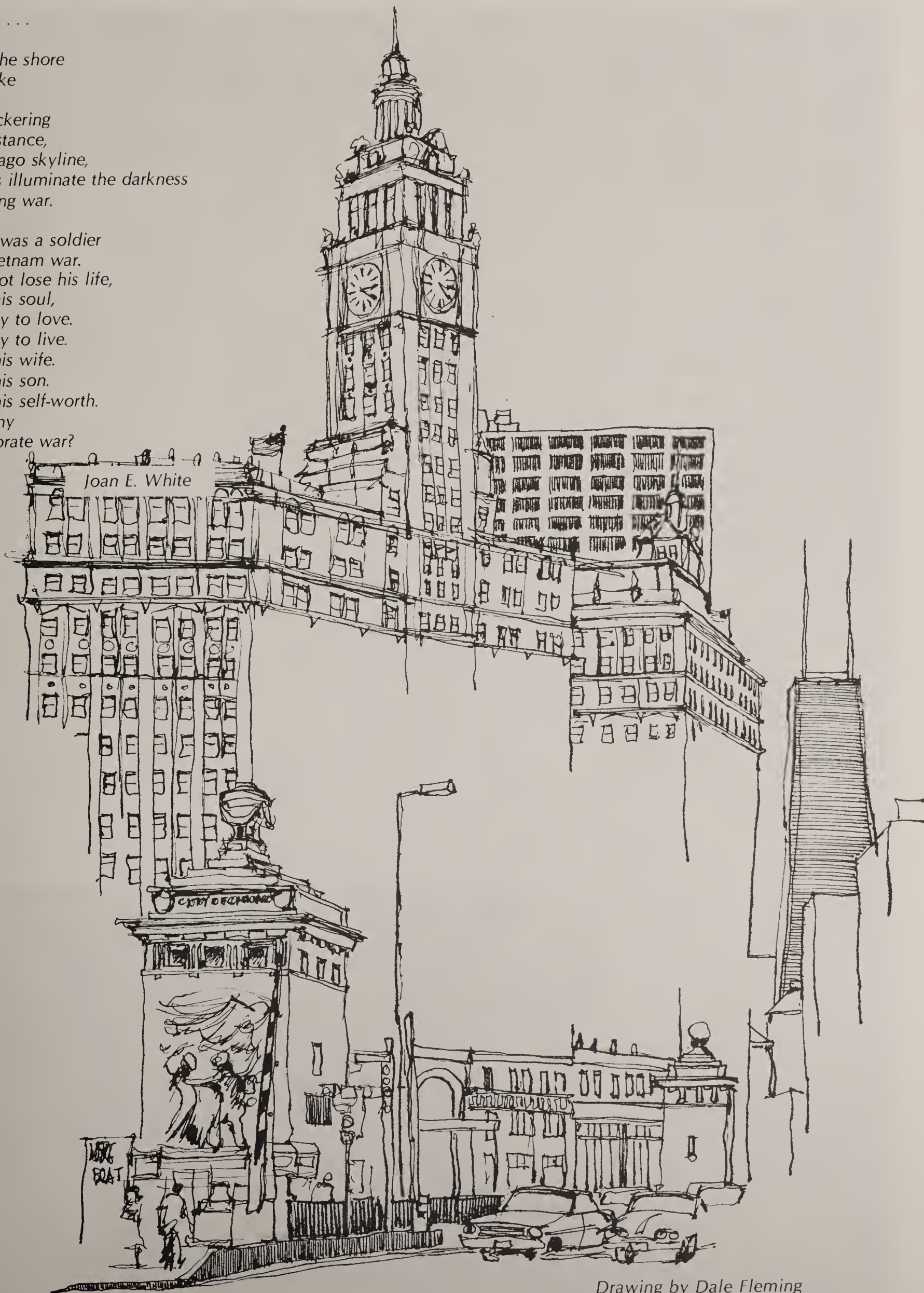
Joan White

For John. . . .

I sat on the shore
Of the lake
At dusk,
Lights flickering
In the distance,
The Chicago skyline,
Fireworks illuminate the darkness
Celebrating war.

My love was a soldier
In the Vietnam war.
He did not lose his life,
He lost his soul,
His ability to love.
His ability to live.
He lost his wife.
He lost his son.
He lost his self-worth.
Is this why
We celebrate war?

Joan E. White



Drawing by Dale Fleming

Dale Fleming



Illusions?

*I saw the spirit of a young girl
Standing by my dresser.
I called to her.
I frightened her.
She went away
But she left a rose
For me.*

Joan White

*As stars
mysteriously glow
in the night sky,
so do your eyes
twinkle lovingly
as you look at me.*

*As lake waves
gently wash
up the sandy shore,
so is your voice
refreshingly soft
as you speak to me.*

*As newly opened roseleaf
is satiny-smooth
atop its thorn-sharp stem,
so is your touch
caressingly sensuous
as you embrace my body.*

Natrona Wilson

Colored Glass

*A jagged piece of colored glass in the sand
Sparkles—glitters—
Reflections from the sun.
There's a rainbow inside
No one else notices.*

Joan White

Marbles

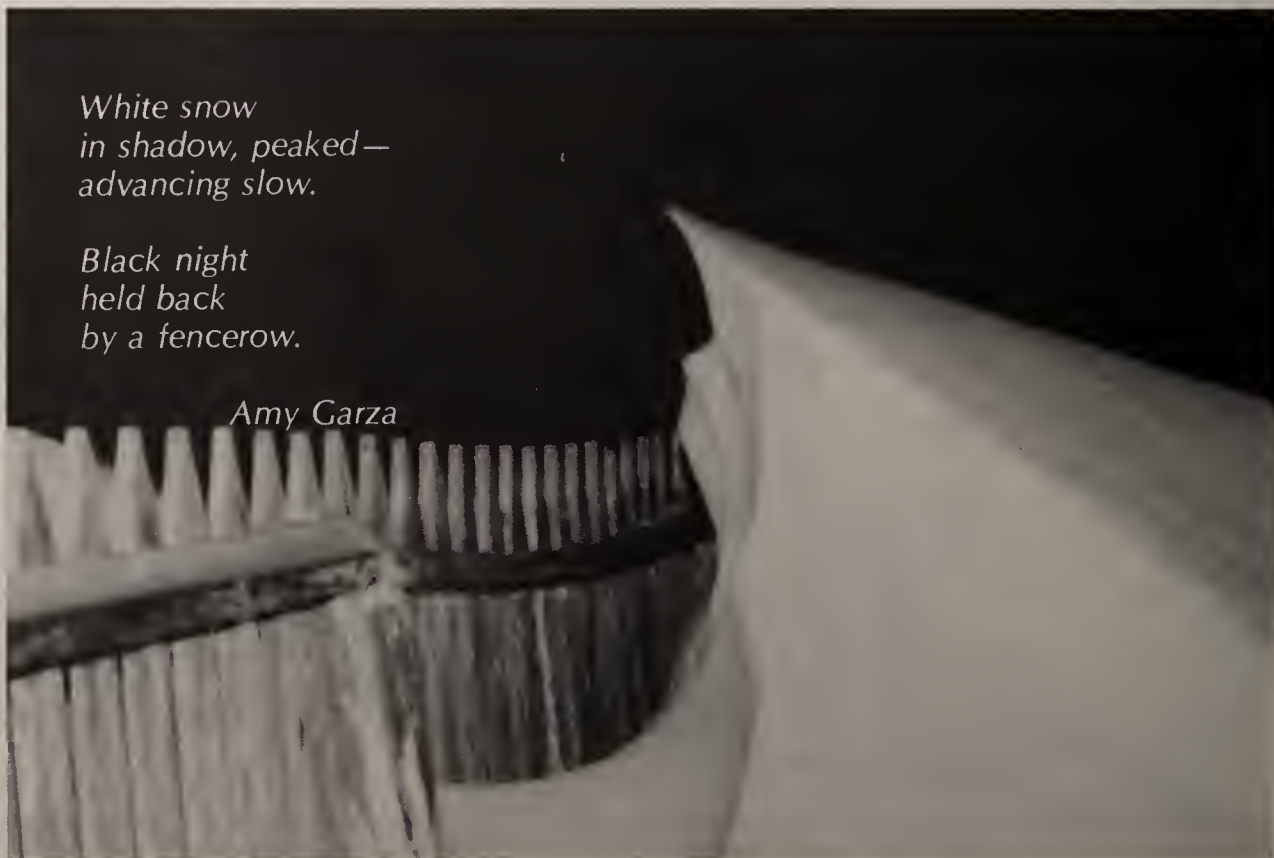
*Marbles
In an antique jar—
Jack Spratt
Strawberry preserves
1922
The remains
Of an old man—
His childhood.*

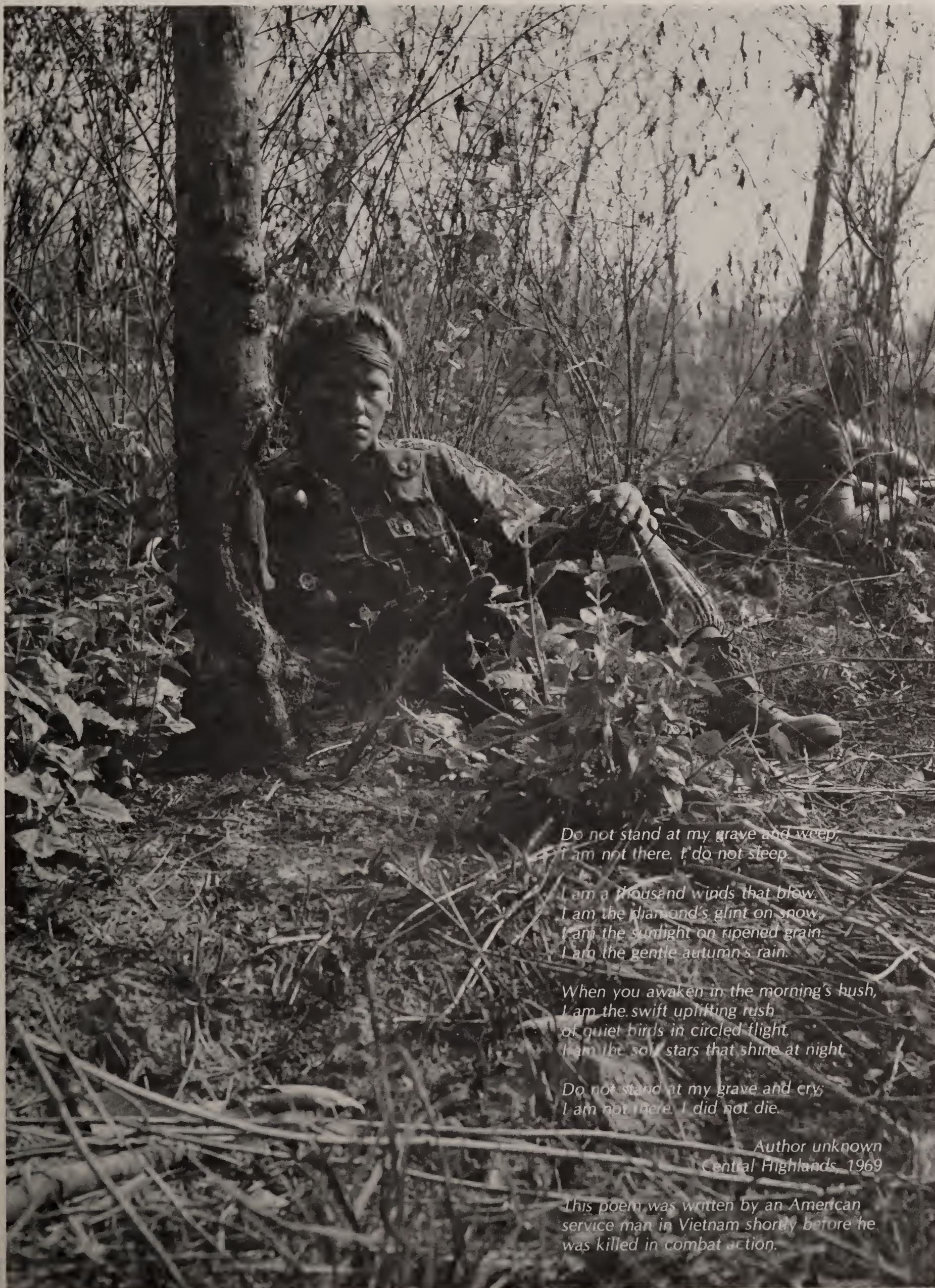
Joan White

*White snow
in shadow, peaked—
advancing slow.*

*Black night
held back
by a fencerow.*

Amy Garza





Do not stand at my grave and weep,
I am not there. I do not sleep.

I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond's glint on snow,
I am the sunlight on ripened grain,
I am the gentle autumn's rain.

When you awaken in the morning's hush,
I am the swift uplifting rush
of quiet birds in circled flight,
I am the soft stars that shine at night.

Do not stand at my grave and cry;
I am not there. I did not die.

Author unknown
Central Highlands, 1969

This poem was written by an American
service man in Vietnam shortly before he
was killed in combat action.



Photograph by Maggie Dust

The Soldier

The bitter tears
of my anguished heart
flow relentlessly
like the waters
from the gutters
after torrential rains;
across the threshold
of eternity.
You stand
in knee deep mud
formed by my tears
and pretend
you do not hear me,
as my soul
screams the murder
of many years.
The God
I once knew
can no longer bathe
my tattered soul
with the love
I can no longer
Feel,
nor Share,
nor Perpetrate.
The ice that flows
through my veins,
like great rivers
flowing seaward
to my heart,
causes my every breath
to be a Labor.
Pain—
ever present in my mind
creates visions
I can not explain.
As the branches
of the forest
reach and bow
in every direction—

so is the transaction
of my way.
The serpent
that swallows
the fish of the deep
causes the seeker
to hasten
to be not sought.
My bed
can no longer
afford my stranded body.
My eyes
know not rest;
my mind
knows not sleep;
my hands
know not peace.
My cradle is empty
of the innocence
it once bore,
my mother
does not know me.
Her succulent breast
fed a Soldier.
Now—
the Soldier is dead.
He has died
many times, yet—
he is forced,
yes, forced
to resurrect himself,
don his Armor,
and Fight,
until the moon
shall turn to Blood.
Relentlessly,
demons ravage his soul—
Until—
the Soldier
has paid his debt.

Harry M. Wright

Please—Bring Him Home

I don't know what he suffers there,
I cannot feel his grief, despair—
His agony is only known
To men who have been caged—alone.

I only feel a selfish pain,
A fear that I might pray in vain
And never see again his face
Or feel again his strong embrace.

I need his love while I am young
With many fears to walk among.
I need his help to guide me through—
To him, the dangers are not new.

For how long must I wonder when
My father will be mine again?
How many years can he survive?
Is he, even now, alive?

Before it is too late to try,
Before my life must pass him by,
Please, bring him home, and I'll be then
My father's little girl again.

Written by the daughter
of an Air Force pilot
who was shot down
over Laos in 1966



Photograph by Maggie Dust

Hero No More

*I entered the service at an early stage
when Vietnam was just a name,
then got caught in the escalation. . . .
a pawn in a deadly game.*

*I survived the combat training
learning to serve my country well,
then boarded the transport that took me
from heaven and into hell.*

*I had visions of being a hero,
a loved and respected man,
of wearing my accolades proudly
with flags, cheering crowds and bands.*

*The war for me was a mission of peace
to be fought with honor and pride,
yet no degree of courage
could quell the fear I felt inside,
as I disembarked in monsoon rains
with heat flashes in the sky
and with a gun in my hand, I changed my life. . . .
and caused some people to die.*

*I did some things while over there
other men would never dare,
Thinking that you would praise my name
but I found you didn't care.*

*One town was filled
with women and their young
and I thought we had it made. . . .
but I found our only greeting
was a kid with a hand grenade.*

*He forced me to make a choice
about how I wanted to die.
Would it be from the explosion. . . .
or would I get him first
and die every day inside.*

*I made the choice to stay alive
while doing the best I could,
and counted the days till I rotated home
to leave that place for good.*

*The dead men had already made
their silent journeys home,
and rested now beneath the ground
with dog tags made of stone.*

*The wounded men, their missions through
were flown out right away.
They suffer now in hospital wards
fighting to survive each day.*

*Even I had my own tough job
when I finally made it home
with no marching bands, no cheering crowds
and friends that left me alone. . . .
I stood in lines and filled out forms
grabbing for what I could get
and got tired of people telling me,
"There's no place here for a vet."*



Photographer Unknown
Contributed by VVLP of Indiana

*I was harassed by the protestors
for fighting a war uncondoned
and criticized by the Americans
who chose to stay at home.*

*As I roamed around the country
I saw the battle that raged right here. . . .
I had my own tragedy to tell you
yet no one wanted to hear.*

*I did what I did
because I thought it was right
that when my country fought. . . .
I had to fight,
But you know. . . . that's no longer right.*

*The times have changed
and people don't feel the same
about men coming home from war. . . .
No marching bands, no cheering crowds
no monuments anymore.*

*So the faded rattle of runs
is the only band I'll know
and my monument will be my tombstone
standing with others in a row.
My flying flag is furled now
to be stored forever more.
I'm an orphan of the war
not its hero. . . . anymore.*

Bill Marsh

Corporal Greaver

That warm morning
on the sunrise side of the highest ground

we waited for Greaver to be lifted
after twelve months and twenty-five days and
two wounds

out of the war
and into clean air.

Against the silence
the sniper's sudden sound
and the flat smack of lead against bone
paralyzed our lives

just before Greaver's
soft night call
turned us to see him falling
reaching for his head

the echo of the only shot that day
dying
into the distant ticking sound
of Greaver's freedom plane
coming to take him home.

Charles L. Woodard

New Home

Barbed wire fences, three rolls high;
Do it right or else you'll die.
Fill up sand bags, shovel at a time;
Move out front, set another mine.
Set out trip flares, fix a killing zone.
Dig your hole deep, Marine;
For this is your new home.

Jack Adams

The Loc Ninh Secret

The man looked at me and smiled
And all the while lay dying
For I would live and this he knew
He couldn't see why I was crying.
As I turned to go he smiled
As I turned to go I cried
And wondered why it's always
The good who have to die.
The man wanted to be left alone
And I wanted to go
But we both knew I couldn't leave
Or else everybody'd know.
And I shook him and cried
And he smiled and died.

Mac Mackechnie

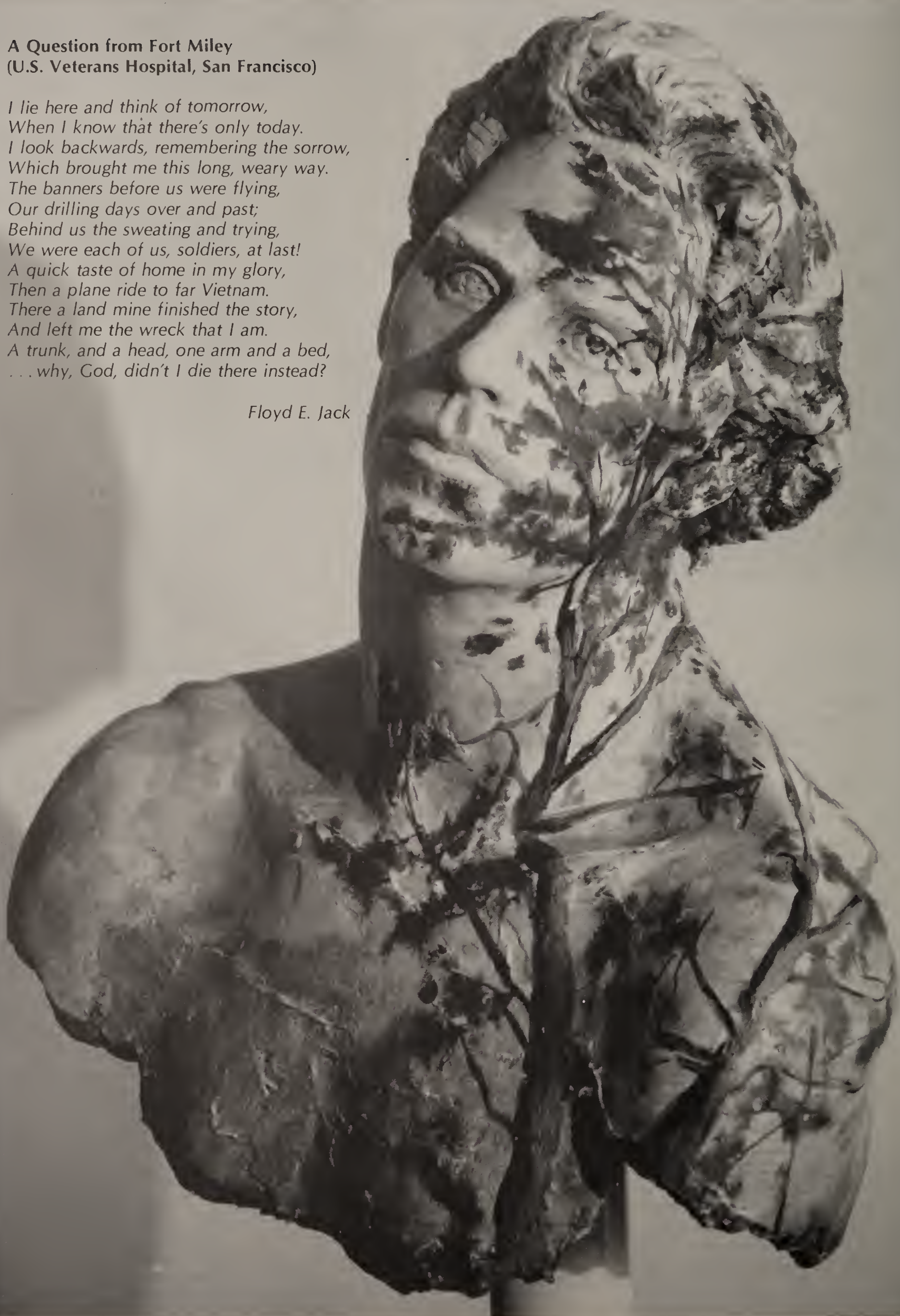
"it didn't mean nothin"
cried
the
private
who
dripped
the
blood
that
ran
for
many
"it don't mean nothin"
whispered
the
youth
as
his
friend
lay
dead
and
the
hill
taken
from
the
enemy
was
bled
for
again
"it don't mean nothin"
yelled
the
sergeant
who
was
spat
on
in
a
west-coast
airport
by
a
young
beauty
wearing
jane
fonda
buttons
"OH-LORD"
came
the
voice
of
58
thousand:
"our
names
are
not
on
the
wall
for
nothin. . ."

G. A. Valera

**A Question from Fort Miley
(U.S. Veterans Hospital, San Francisco)**

*I lie here and think of tomorrow,
When I know that there's only today.
I look backwards, remembering the sorrow,
Which brought me this long, weary way.
The banners before us were flying,
Our drilling days over and past;
Behind us the sweating and trying,
We were each of us, soldiers, at last!
A quick taste of home in my glory,
Then a plane ride to far Vietnam.
There a land mine finished the story,
And left me the wreck that I am.
A trunk, and a head, one arm and a bed,
... why, God, didn't I die there instead?*

Floyd E. Jack



Photograph by Robert Buono "Harmony"



Photograph by Maggie Dust

Upon Seeing the Picture of a Tiny War Victim

*I found you in a reference book and was transfixed in fatherly grief.
 "So long ago, so long ago," they say;
 But only yesterday for me as I watched you lying there,
 Suddenly longing for the reassuring squeals of my own child.*

*Did I somehow do this to you, sweet one?
 Someone could take my son just as you were taken,
 Now that I am older and wiser and removed from battle,
 And the pain of loss would have great meaning.*

*I was so young and knew so little of what is felt today.
 My dreams remain filled with thunder and smoke—
 A just punishment for the part I played—if only
 It is penance enough to save my child from your fate.*

*Forgive me, mother of the babe you clutch so tenderly.
 I did not know that I would love a child the same as you.
 Were you ever reborn, tiny toddler. . . or are you
 Sleeping peacefully, forever in your loving mother's arms?*

Robert L. Reiff

Nurse

*I don't go off to war.
 so they say.
 I'm a woman.*

*Who then
 has worn my boots?
 And whose memories are these,
 Of youths suffering? Of
 blood and burns, of their
 tears and their cries?*

*I'm a woman
 And I've tasted man's war.
 Our war. And
 He knows that I
 Love him in
 No greater way
 Than to share in his life
 Or his death.*

*What are the rules?
 Man or woman,
 We are prey
 To suffer and survive together.*

*Please don't forget me.
 I've been through war's hell
 And if only you will listen.*

*I've a story
 Of those chosen
 To sacrifice for us all.*

Diane Carlson Evans



Photographer Unknown
 21 Contributed by VVLP of Indiana

Agent Orange

No secret to us this agent of ours.
Who fell from the sky, and killed all
the flowers.

Along with the trees that stood so tall.
So the enemy below, we could fall.

Then one day he went away, and no one
said a price we would pay.

Until one day the doctors would say,
the agent was stealing our breath away.

And to our children with eyes of tears.
The agent would be with them for all
their years.

To Uncle Sam we say, Apologize to the
nation upon this day.

So never more an agent will lay, within
the bodies of our young and our brave.

M. Ross Cole



Eyes of Blue

*With fair hair and eyes of blue
Standing straight and tall
My brother, a soldier in Vietnam
Fights to save us all.*

*Yesterdays child, now a man
And clutched in his hand
A rifle that stands for death and war.
In this jungle land.*

*Among many is his name,
Just another face.
But honor and pride, he brings to me
From this far off place.*

*With fair hair and eyes so blue,
Standing straight and tall.
A pilot, also here in Vietnam,
Fights to save us all.*

*Yesterday—a friend of mine
Now—a love so dear.
He's in my heart, and in my mind.
I'm wishing he were near.*

*With love in my heart for both,
I'll do my job here.
For I am a nurse in Vietnam
Serving for one year.*

*In each patient's face I see,
A Soldier—a man.
I'll think of a brother and my love,
In this foreign land.*

*God keep them safe while they are here.
In this combat zone.
For a certain nurse down in Vung Tau,
Wants them both at home.*

*With fair hair and eyes of blue,
Standing straight and tall.
Love to a pilot, a brother and
American Soldiers, all.*

*Lt. Sandy Black
36th Evac. Hospital
Vung Tau, Vietnam, 67-68*

*Today I saw a flower
Reminding me of you,*

*So congenial all alone,
Amassed with morning dew,*

*A canvas of nature, green, brown, and blue,
Lent only to the grandeur, of all this flower's hue,*

*Today I saw a flower
Reminding me of you.*

*Larry Aleshire
U.S. Air Force
Pleiku Viet Nam, 1968-69*



Drawing by Craig White

To My Warrior

*He told no one that he fought in Nam,
He was torn with pain and guilt.
He knew not if his friends were dead or alive,
Until the black wall was built.*

*He came to me after two other wives,
But I got him almost too late
I wish I'd known him years ago,
Before his pain turned to hate.*

*He tried so very hard to fit in,
He wanted to be oh, so straight,
But they taught him to kill in Nam,
And he was teaching me how to hate.*

*Please hold me close, don't pull away,
Please stand proud and tall.
Don't drive me away with all your hate,
I didn't kill the boys on the wall.*

*I'll stay with him,
I'll never leave.
I'll share the pain in his life,
I want to heal the wounds of war,
Cause I'm a Nam Vet's wife.*

*Mrs. Don Pat Sier
November, 1984*



Drawing by Williams

Lost Feelings, Lost Friend

I would like to find the happy-go-lucky guy,
People say I was before.
They say, too, they miss the smiling guy,
Who was sent off to war.

They say I used to "stop and smell the roses",
That I was laid back, but not too much.
That I knew the value of a laugh,
A cry, a loving touch.

I'm puzzled when they say this,
For this guy's not known to me.
But he sounds more worth knowing,
Than the guy I seem to be.

So, I'm going deep inside me,
To see if he still exists.
God knows I want to be that old friend,
The one they sorely miss.

Because I want to hold a woman,
And be crazy with emotions inside.
And to look into the mirror,
And feel some sense of pride.

I want, too, to be soft and gentle,
And to yet still be a man.
And to be that guy of feelings,
The friend they lost in Nam.

Jack Adams

2500 Tear Drops Fall

The tears they fall, so slowly down
For those lost in air, or on the ground
Their haunted eyes, a watch they keep
Till we bring them home, or God bids them sleep

The families pray and wonder why
America left them there to die
The families gave their only son
But America's ashamed—the war wasn't won

There's honor in death—or so they say
America, I'm ashamed you behave this way
We beg for help to get them back
You say they're not there, your hearts are black

You sent them as children to fight for you
The code of conduct said America is true
If you are captured on foreign land
We'd bring you home—we'd take a stand

But now they sit in captured wait
Please bring them home before it's too late
2500 tear drops fell
America, erase some names from the wall

When they return, the war will be won
Give this mother back her son
Bring them home alive or dead
My God America, enough blood they've shed

Look up America—lend them a hand
POW's to their Motherland
Bring them home, stop a Mother's pain
Then I'll say America, "I'm proud of you again."

Pat Sier
Vietnam Veteran's Wife

Dedicated to Timothy Bodden
and Arthur Ecklund
POWs

Words

The politicians say this is Glory;
The rot of wet, decaying flesh.
They call the blisters on my hands Honorable.
The pain of a bullet deep inside my stomach,
They call Glorious Death.
The stench of dying and death is Honor.

The dying and dead see Honor
With glassy eyes.

The wounded cry, moan and die
Feeling the hurt of the Honor—
Of the Glory.

Forever Honorable,
Forever Glorious,
Forever Dead.

Allen Rodgers



A Combat Veteran: Self Portrait

Photograph by Maggie Dust

*It came in a moment, no hesitation or thought.
It swelled atop a rolling wave, high and long.
With one unseen, catastrophic blow, it swirled
and crashed and exploded with death and pain.
America was at war, America was not.*

*Confusion and horror, hate and fear.
No one understood, no one listened.
It was only an old totalitarian ideology,
continued and unquestioned.*

*It happened in another world, not here;
in a time where eighteen years of growing became lost.
It became a void that withdrew life and love at a mystical
speed, like dream vision. The pieces that remained,
and were bound by memory, ever displaced and fragmented,
twisted and contrived, bestowed new life.*

*Green for defense, red from blood.
Sounds intense, omni-vision.
My rifle, a teddy-bear; a grenade, my companion;
a knife, my salvation.*

*Sleeping is unwanted and fought, devices sought.
Agony and torment, frustration and fear. Hate, violent hate,
aura-red glowing about my soul. Years in the making, gone.
Years remaining, laced in the blackness of death.
Years in passing, pain and horror.*

*Once upon a time the highest mountain felt soft beneath
my feet. The mist of jungle steam and vibrant shades of
green formed dew of luscious hues. Tiny lens-like droplets,
convexed and clear, refracted, reflected figurines
depicting my soul.*

*Deep, down inside, a kalidoscope of wonderment whirled
me around, mirroring twirling visions of treasures
and despair. I pondered upon the deity of this crystalline
of magical delusion. Then found an ancient war chest
flowering in lineaments of gold. Overshadowing and unseen
followed the doom of a blackened hole.*

*A mystery, a risk, a duty to transcend. I stared until
its brilliance changed to the red of mahogany on oak.
Its iron and brass ribs tightened into bindings.
Brute force drew my nails into a celestial-casket
of wooden bones.*

*Deeper into the black vacuum I flew, floundering
tipsy-terry over heritage of old ideology created anew.
And when storybook glory failed its resurrection,
my heart quietly stilled. Death prevailed. Only a fable
could indure these illusive nightshift chills.*

*My contemplation in eyes of coal. Feeling petrified
hearts turn stone. Envisioning death among the unknown.
War dimmed my sight too low. Rain is my sole tear
to show. Oh, how this child has grown.*

*Life, laden and sealed, captive within a drudge's orb,
decayed and boned. From a bloodletting bed to a defensible
corner, a stand-off awaiting my death. Shades of grey
are black-and-white. To kill or be killed, my new
way of life. Slaying was so masterfully taught,
a merciless ado.*

*Night and blood, black-and-red; I lay hidden from view.
Ritualistic disembowelment, emptying-out guts; echoing,
belling screams reverberating my woven woe.*

*Then, in the end, a measure of fresh air composed my passion,
a subtlest breath of purity that breathed upon me
from among the branches. The power of God did pierce
my vision, though fire became fueled by His very branches.*

*Ignited foliage, thwarted roofs, a sauna spouting-off
fire and hell. Then there flowed the crushing wrath
from home, a sudden chill. No arctic wind could be so cold.
It beat and pounded across the great waves, a broadcast
of montras that seared my heart, numbed my soul.
The one-hundred pounds saddled atop tickled beneath this load.*

Sweat and rain, cloth-a-rotting, food laced in steel.
A cigarette flame deliberately concealed, cupped to draw
from it a leisure feel.

Sensations of sleep merge with wake, one eye open,
one eye closed. Coffee sharpened to slice through bog,
bitter-sweet hate brewed for each drop. Is this life,
beyond or below?

Visions once stirred amongst omniscient eyes, guided my ste,
and told me when to hide. I was flushed in the hate
of compassion, bleached white under desert sky. I could
see in the dark, beyond the night; life became distilled
onto the other side.

Walking through village and desert-scape.
Seeking lost mountain trailways.
Wading amongst muck of sewage swamps,
personified by corpse-la-rot.

Death by bullet and metal-bamboo.
Pain from the blade of pungi-dream.
Fear sound, fear silence,
fear motion and fear the still.

Tomorrow, unexpected; tonight, up-for-grabs.
The moment is but my wrist cut, drained dry and glad.
Where did love end and my hate begin?
And when will my wounds of salt heal inside?
Time and place are sprung, but the hands of clocks move or

Now, home is filed in D.C., akin abstracts where I lay
bereaved. Savage cross-five downed me. Smeared by the
House's bloody mockery, while I sought simply to see.
Who is the lucky one, certainly not me. I believe,
and I know I'm naive.

I still recall American supremacy, mesmerized in
celluloid imagery. "See that country in need, now go;
never doubt your deed." When air screamed and sucked
and metal flew, I wondered, "Why me?" With nine down
and a legless led, then me, I believed.

And who is the enemy lain lifeless by me? Still clutching
a blood stained photograph of memory; at breast stand
his wife and young family. The tapestry of his jungle
destiny shall surely slay me. In his life, I breathe.

Sleep if you dare. Sleep between cigarettes.
Sleep between shivers of ice and fright. Sleep if you
no longer care. Wake-up to the last morning star and ponder
upon the terror of nightmares. Remember that you are there.

America, America, my glory and my dream, you've decayed
along with your statue of liberty. During a bullet's
quiver, I blinked. Now blackness shades me;
can you not see? When Plymouth Rock sank beneath two
oceans, your pretentious eye opened and sacrificed me;
now I lay withering at your led.

You tied me down to set-me-up,
the tired, lifeless and weatherworn,
dried and cracked.
My horrors are reflections off your back.

"It was him who cast the stone." No reply.
Loyalty carved my bed from the mud and rock,

and fear cuddled my knife during the dreaded nights.
There I would lay and listen and seldom sleep.
Catcalls from the hillside, "Tonight, Marines, you die,"
awakened my stead. Instead, I lay counting mosquitoes buzz
and slowly draw blood, hoping for a moment of dream.

As I lay remembering the dying cry and the torn flesh
drawn up into the sky, I wearily drifted into a calm.
Then the blackness became inflamed and scores of rifle-fire
encircled me; death screams blotted my silence.
Now dumbfounded; too numb to know why.

And too late I learned of my sacrifice. I must now seek
out the enemy for what he has done. While I peered
into the trees and caves and a starlight-scope, I failed
to see the knife that slithered from behind. Suddenly,
when safe, I felt a jerk, then was shown my spine.
Now I can only feel the tears of the children's eyes
as they cry.

Upon release and coming home, I thought the city
would clear my mind. I remembered a year ago while
walking Seattle in the night, saying my goodbye.
How I then contemplated the end, holding childhood in palm.
Now that I've gone and returned, is everything alright?

Lost for a decade and five, with no direction home,
wondering between the shadows, staying out-of-sight,
fighting old battles every night, seeing faces of the dead
beckoning my retreat. Will the dying ever die?
Can a Purple Heart pump life?

Often I remember friends at a different time,
whose eyes gleam with the innocence that was once mine.
I opened my head to air, showing scars of holy terror.
They turned and closed their eyes. Soon I was left behind.

"The light at the end of the tunnel" blurred my vision
and made me blind. So I became a silhouette and glided
between the light. I am the night for all time. America,
America, bring me back home.

For the few and forgotten captive in terror.
Suffering hell about the forests they must work.
Can I forget as the years pass and cruelly brand
their hide. The lot suffer America's misdeed and
all she left behind.

These forgotten soldiers settle deeper into the muck;
they all stand quiet and still. Their hope is now the twilight
of America's frenzy and rust. Come and see their last tear
drain them dry. America, America, please bring us home.

Have you forgotten the honor you bestowed,
to let us fight for destiny and manifest your lives.
And now, while you pour molten gold onto our eyes,
you ask us to uphold the flag. Do you forget our harsh
struggles or just ignore our flight? Is death
the only peace that America can provide?

Once there was a yellow ribbon, shredded by the wind,
for a few at a later place and time. America never forgot
being kept inside. And as this national tragedy passed
in four seasons, the dungeons up North remained dark
for what seems like all time. America, America,
at least let us die.



Photograph by Matthew B. Aitken

A Dedication to the Vietnam Veterans

*On this Veterans' Day of Nineteen Hundred and Eighty-Two,
We've finally come to honor you—
All of you who fought in Vietnam,
Who lost an arm, leg, a hand—*

*Peace be to you now at last.
For those of you who lost your lives,
Whose names we read today,
Your sacrifice will ne'er be forgotten
As of this Veterans' Day.*

*Peace be to you now at last.
Serving God and country proudly,
Just as others did in other wars,
When your country called, you responded,
You obeyed our country's laws.*

*Peace be to you now at last.
We claimed it was a senseless war,
With that, you quite agreed,
But still you went with good intentions,
To Vietnam, who was in need.*

*Peace be to you now at last.
It was so hard to bear at times,
And though you really tried,
You couldn't help but feel
That you had lost your pride.*

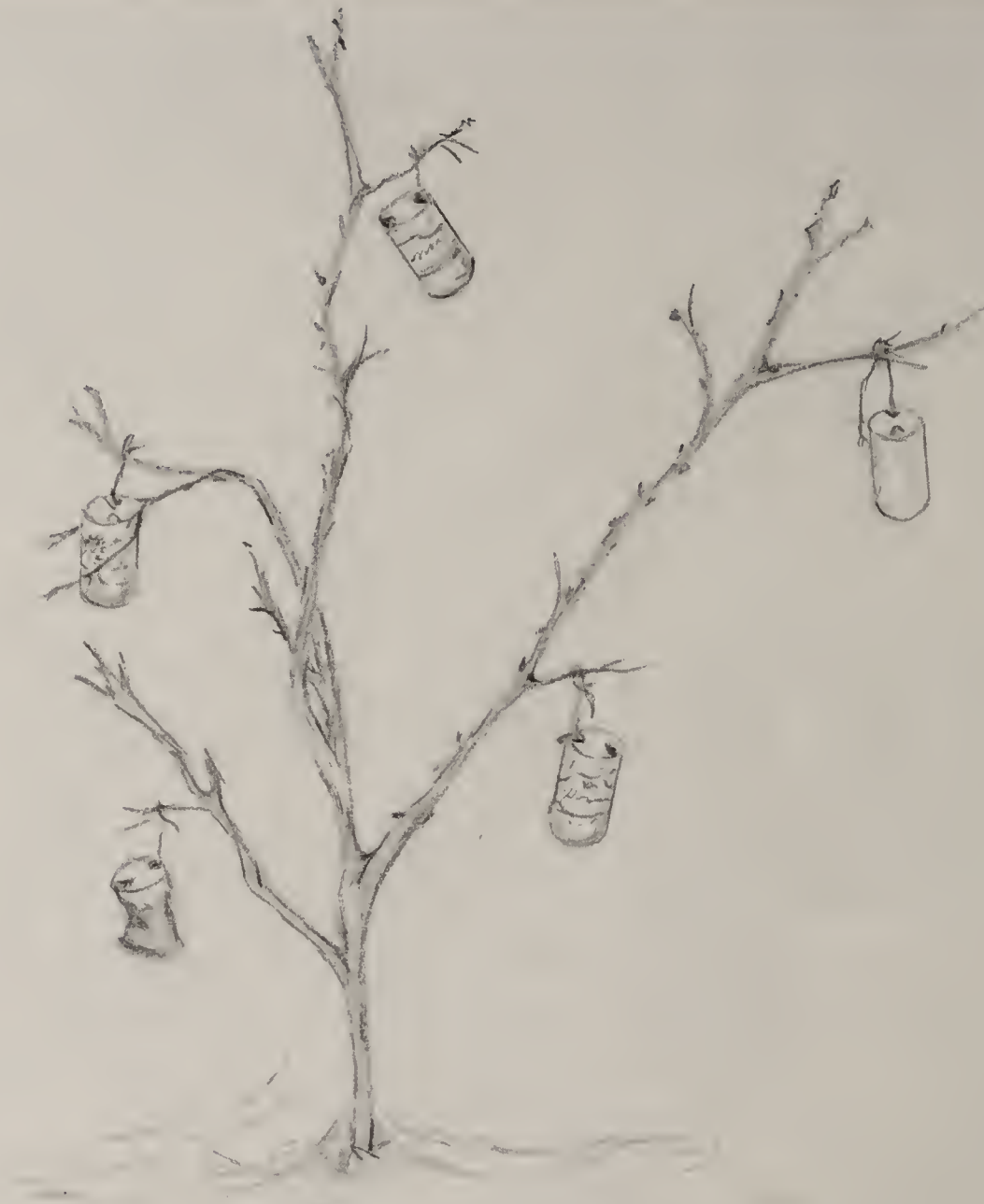
*Peace be to you at last.
America thanks you here and now,
As we should have long ago,
You who were suffering over there
While we were safe at home.*

*Peace be to you now at last.
To those of you who survived,
Whose honor has been long overdue,
We hope you'll be rewarded,
For all that you've been through.*

*Peace be to you now at last.
And now, as we dedicate this Memorial
To you, the missing and the dead,
And also to those who survived
The awful fear and dread,
We say: For all the mistakes that we have made
Let this truly be the end,
Peace be to you now at last,
And Lord, forgive us,*

Amen.

Mary Lucci



*Christmas in Vietnam 1967
Drawing by Eileen Rodell*

No Christmas

*As you celebrate this joyous time of year,
be it wrapping presents,
a drink with friends,
or decorating the tree with your loved
ones near.*

*Take some time to say a prayer,
perhaps to shed a tear,
for our POW's and MIA's,
"Will have no Christmas this year."*

*No "Merry Christmas" will they hear,
no loved ones by them to draw near,
or friends with whom to share some cheer.*

*For them there is no Santa Claus,
no Christmas tree this day.
You shouldn't have to wonder much,
just what it is they pray.*

*No White Christmas,
No Christmas feast,
or are they even fed at least?*

*Are they hungry?
Are they well?
How deep their torment or their hell?*

*How long since Christmas filled their hearts?
How long before their home trip starts?*

*So while you celebrate this joyous time
of year,
say a prayer,
shed your tears.*

*While our POW's and MIA's are so far away,
take time if you would,
to remember this day.*

*While reading stories of Santa and
his pack,
"Let's pray that next Christmas,
Our Boys will be back."*

*Susan K. Allison
Vietnam Veteran's Wife*



Courtesy of Cam Ranh Bay Army
Contributed by Maggie Dust



Photograph by Maggie Dust

The Sniper

The night was deathly quiet as the stars stood tall in the sky.
I stood alone within my thoughts,
thinking not that I might be about to die.

But somewhere off within the dark,
another man's thoughts were only of me.
For he was the lonely sniper and I was
his enemy.

As I stood alone, while the other men
slept,
his rifle he picked up, its operation
he checked.

While I stood there dreaming of a
different world, my mind tangled like
a maze.

His finger slowly squeezed the trigger.
My breath he tried to take away.

As the bullet slammed into the ground
at my feet.

My heart viciously pumped to its
maximum beat.

But the sniper of the dark had missed
his prey.

For this American warrior had lived
to fight another day.

M. Ross Cole



The Wall Rubbing

On 11 November, 1984, I made my first Pilgrimage to the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Washington, D.C.

"Brother Nam" Tim Nash, was my guide and crutch on this journey back into my past. Tim had been there two times previously to honor his brother, John Michael Nash, an Army pilot shot down over Laos on 15 March, 1966.

Tim made a rubbing of his brother's name for me as I watched in somewhat of a trance, overwhelmed by the emotions wrought from the enormity of the whole memorial and the thousands paying homage.

Sometime later the image of Tim making the rubbing reoccurred often and I was finally forced to recreate the image I so vividly recalled.

Craig White



Photograph by Maggie Dust



Perhaps one can say that the literary awards competition at PUC originated in my English 31, January-June 1947, in which class Carl Wayo of Whiting wrote a theme on his impressions of the Calumet Region steel mills. He submitted it to the West Lafayette awards competition and won a place in its category although having, as a freshman, competed against upper class and graduate students. It took at least ten years before another of our students, John Hammond, succeeded.

This situation, it seemed to me, could discourage our students from writing and competing. Therefore, in the early 60's I asked permission from Dean Carl Elliott to start our own competition. PUC students were permitted continued participation at West Lafayette, but those of West Lafayette couldn't compete here. Shortly after my retirement, I was informed that Dr. John Tuckey had suggested giving a name to the PUC awards and that he offered my name because I had actually initiated the program.

About the second year of the Sigrid Stark Literary Awards, I thought I should do something beneficial; otherwise the honor would be a rather hollow one. Knowing how difficult it was to acquire a fund for the winners, I decided to give five hundreds dollars to start one. Also, this would give some relief to those in the English Department who had the continuing task of correcting and appraising hundreds of articles, themes, poetry, dramas, etc. I continued adding so that the permanent fund is now five thousand dollars, from which the interest serves as a basis for the awards.

With the devotion and the suggestions of Professor Charles Tinkham, there has been a remarkable participation by many additional department leaders who, in turn, donate awards and encourage writing; he has also invited high schools to send their best poetry.

Four years ago, PUC students won five first places at the West Lafayette competition and have continued to win many firsts. Some students in the SSLAC have won two and three places. Several continue writing and winning. Many former student winners have been making excellent strides in commercial and literary writing. We can truly say that our PUC awards program has prospered with the outstanding participation of many devoted members.

The awards day has become a very special one. With the cooperation of Dwight Kirkpatrick of Lectures and Communication, some notable speakers, including Senator Eugene McCarthy and Harrison Salisbury, have added to the importance and worth of the occasion.

Sigrid Stark



Drawing by Dale Fleming

Divorce . . .

You once held me
As a cocoon
Encases a butterfly—
I felt safe—secure
Warm—loved.
But the cocoon
Wore thin
Cracked—opened.

I stumbled out
Not knowing
How to walk or fly.
So tempted to return
To try and mend the cracks—
Again safe—secure
Warm—loved
In your arms.

But the cocoon
Slowly crumbled
Never again to hold me,
And I am forced
To find my way
Through an
Unforgiving world
That trips me
Causes me
To stumble—fall.

But the more I learn
And try again,
I realize that
I am a butterfly
In a field of daffodils
And the world
Can be beautiful
If I choose.

Now the cocoon is
Torn and shattered
And the safety—security
Warmth—love
I thought I had
Was only an image
In my mind.

You see, my friend,
That image
Is still there
And the safety—security
Warmth—love
Has always been
And always will be
In myself
Not in anyone else.

Joan E. White



'Ol Timer by Dale Fleming

Old Jake

It was right around Spring, 1983.
We were students, Terry, Michael, John, and me.
We were cruising, yelling, raising—well,
Destination—Florida, Ft. Lauderdale.
We were doing 75 on 65, the Interstate,
Never saw the man; wheelchair, pale, overweight.
I was driving, I felt the brake slide,
I pushed the pedal to the underside.

We were excited, the others ran to the man,
Terry, John, and Michael were scared, you understand?
Me, I was stunned, couldn't move much,
I just gripped the steering wheel, firm to the touch.

Terry reached him, the first one there.
He grabbed the man, and turned right his chair.
I could see Terry checking him out. . .
Finally, "He's all right," I heard him shout.

John and Michael were looking also,
Checking his hands, legs, body, head to toe.
"I'm okay," he laughed and spread a grin.
My hands loosened, I prayed, "I'll never sin again."

"Thanks for caring," the victim sighed.
"I'm truly sorry, I am," I nearly cried.
"I'm fine," he spoke. "See," and raised a hand.
"Okay," I said, but I wondered about this man.
"So, where you going?" I said putting a hand in reach.
"Me," he said, "I'm headed for the beach."

"The beach," I said and my hand went slack.
"Yes, Ft. Lauderdale, women, sand, I'm not holding back."

He laughed again, "No, I'm not a dirty old man."
"Just wanted to see things while I can."
"Oh, but the women would be nice, and I wouldn't mind at all,"
"But I just wanted to do and see it all."

I looked at the man, he seemed pretty tame,
So I put out my hand, "What's your name?"
"Jacob Ryan," he said, "at this end."
And once again that beautiful grin.
Introduced the boys, then myself,
Then decided it was time we left.

Oh, did I tell you, Jake came too.
I guess you could say he joined our crew.

Well, we partied during our break, and had a ball,
Jake was there, throughout it all,
He drank, he cussed, and even chased women,
Rumor was, once he even tried swimming.
'Old Jake' as he was later referred,
"Became popular, a man of few words."

Then the break ended, really too fast.
We packed, we knew it couldn't last.
Now Jake, he moved kind of slow,
He moaned, "I guess I'm just getting old."
I replied, "You should follow rules; go by the book!"
I looked at Old Jake and saw a hurt look.

Jake explained, "People see me, some want to help,
But I believe in me and can help myself."
"I'll tell you true and I'm proud to say,
I enjoy living this or any other way."
"Life is great and I love breathing air,
I have rights and I do care."
"Anyone who cares, just leave me be,
But watch this space and you watch me,
I can do what you do and do it right,
Though it may be slow and I'll look a fright,
But God blessed you and gave me a song,
I guess that's why I can be so strong."

I stared at Jake, then I looked down,
This man was very profound.
I wanted to reach out and hold his hand,
I knew I had met a better man,
But I guess the words hit pretty straight,
All I could do is say, "it's getting late."

As I packed and threw in my stuff,
I thought of Jake and realized life could be rough.
But Jake he knew, wiser than I,
He saw challenges and had to try.

I looked down, saw my legs; healthy and strong;
I knew Old Jake had been wronged,
But he was willing to carry his line,
And even able to help me with mine.

I parted Lauderdale, tired and tan.
The following Spring, I even went back again.
I didn't see Jake, I miss him so,
But wherever he is, I'm sure he's on the go,
Seeing, Doing, Daring, Enjoying life's Blessed ways,
Caring, Helping, Loving all of his days.

Allen Rodgers



Photograph by Jeff Ossello
Highland High School

Women of The Eighties

The woman of the 1980's. Who is she and why is she any different than the woman of any other day? We read about this modern woman continually, and I am convinced she is very much a part of each one of us. She lives a life that is totally chaotic, or should we call it insanity? By insanity I mean a term that explains the often hectic everyday life of the 1980's woman. Insanity will not be used to describe someone who is mentally unsound and therefore institutionalized.

Insanity is suddenly finding yourself driving on the freeway wondering what day it is, where you are going, and why you are wearing the same clothes you wore yesterday. A quick shift in thought brings you back to reality, but for a flash, you thought you might be losing it—rational thought that is. How many of us have ever had this happen? It happened to a friend of mine, Sylvia, and yet she leads what society would call a normal life: she has twin six year old boys, is working on her Masters Degree in nursing, works at St. Anthony Hospital, and maintains a home, husband, and social life. She wouldn't have it any other way, but sometimes wonders if all this pandemonium is as glamorous as everyone tells her it is. What ever happened to baking bread, canning, and sewing?

Wait—the woman of the 1980's does all those things, too. My friend Kathy is an expert at juggling a career and home life. She teaches high school art, attends college three nights a week working towards her Masters Degree, is rearing two teenage children on her salary of about \$12,000 a year and recently purchased an older home with many needed repairs. Her ex-husband does not have a steady job, so the child support checks are usually in arrears. She also finds time to sew most of her clothes, can or freeze an entire vegetable garden every fall, manage a corn detasseling project each summer, work at all the football and basketball games collecting tickets, and still devote time to the local church. On occasion she bursts into tears. Could this be a result of a hectic life? A sudden thought of "Why am I doing all this?" Does this sound familiar? I told you the woman of the 1980's was a part of every one of us.

Insanity is also that mad dash to the calendar only to discover the annual Cub Scout Banquet began a half hour ago, and you have not even started the vegetable casserole you offered to bring. "Bobby, Harold, and Julie have all been sick; the in-laws were here for eight days; Jim was robbed at gunpoint, the pipes froze, and we have been swimming in water up to our knees," you apologize to the chairman the following day. No matter when you talk to Mary, it is always the same, a chaotic life with too many demands.

Since we have discussed several of the situations that include insanity, I would now like to explain what insanity is not. Insanity is not a quiet evening at home after a long day at work; it is not a time when there are no children around; it is not a peaceful interlude when the phone is not ringing; it is not an evening when the sorority meeting, Homemaker meeting, PTA meeting or Friendship Circle meeting have all been cancelled. It is not a break in the day when there is no basketball, baseball, soccer or swim practice; it is not a time when the ballet and piano lessons have been cancelled; nor is it a Saturday afternoon without a Tupperware party. These moments of tranquility no longer exist for the modern woman. There is always something to do or someplace to go. Cheer up girls! What would you do in that five minutes of solitude anyway? There would be nothing to worry about, be disturbed over, or concerned with and you might get so nervous you would think you were going insane! But then you would remember that it all starts over tomorrow, and that would be another opportunity to organize your insane style of living.

These are the women of the eighties. They probably are not much different than any of the women of yesteryear that toiled from dawn until dusk. The woman of the 1980's is seeking individual expression and trying to make ends meet. Women of all ages have attempted to do these things. We are continually juggling one activity with another and telling to all who will listen, our tale of woe about hectic everyday life syndrome—or insanity.

Rae Ann Ostenberg



"Julie" by Robert Buono

Love, Honor, and Morality in John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore

Morality is a common subject in drama, and although the question of which character possesses the fewest moral flaws often arises, rarely is it thrown at the audience more forcefully than in John Ford's play 'Tis Pity She's a Whore. Virtually all the characters in this play are morally flawed, but each flaw must be weighed against the flaws of the other characters and against the backdrop of society. Ordinarily, one can reach some conclusion about the people in a play, but Ford's juxtaposition of deceit, murder, and seduction in the play's more "honorable" characters with the sincerity and honesty of the incestuous couple leads the audience either to feel uncomfortably secure knowing that some kind of "right" prevailed at the end or to question the entire value system of society itself.

The one main character who at first appears to be most honorable is Soranzo. At the beginning of the play, Annabella's nurse, Putana, describes him as "kind, noble, wise, rich, handsome, and wholesome," attributes which would certainly make him an admirable person. However, in Act II, Scene ii, Soranzo shows his other, less admirable side. In this scene, he makes his appearance reading love poetry and praising Annabella and seems to be a man of sincere and honest emotion. However, his discussion with Hippolita, which immediately follows the poetry reading, reveals that he is neither kind, honest, nor noble, that is, honorable. Soranzo had apparently had an affair with Hippolita, during which time he encouraged her to advise her husband, Richardetto, to take a voyage. Richardetto takes her advice and supposedly dies on this voyage. When Hippolita berates Soranzo for encouraging her in this action and then forgetting his vows to marry her, leaving her instead to her shame, Soranzo coolly and noncommittally replies, "Who could help this (II.ii.82)?" When Hippolita tells him, rightly, that he could help it, Soranzo gives her a long speech in which he praises her husband and rationalizes the breaking of his vows to Hippolita by saying that those vows were "wicked and unlawful" in the first place and therefore

should not be kept. Then, when Vasques points out that Soranzo is answering the wrong question, Soranzo shifts the blame entirely to Hippolita:

I care not; let her know her monstrous life.
Ere I'll be servile to so black a sin,
I'll be accurs'd. Woman, come here no more:
Learn to repent and die, for by my honor
I hate thee and thy lust: you have been too foul.
(II.ii.95-99)

After he and Annabella are married, Soranzo discovers that Annabella is already pregnant. His reaction to the news belies his true nature. He calls her "strumpet" and "famous whore," speaking as though he believed that she had had numerous frivolous affairs rather than one of the heart: "Now must I be the dad To all that gallimaufry that's stuff'd In thy corrupted bastard-bearing womb. . . (IV.ii.12-14)?"

In this treatment of Annabella, Soranzo displays a double standard that is more than that which governs male and female behavior; his double standard allows him to have an affair with a married woman, but his desire for revenge on the man who caused Annabella's pregnancy indicates that other men cannot do likewise. Worse yet is that Annabella began her affair before she had even agreed to marry Soranzo. Nevertheless, Soranzo wishes for revenge on the man and punishment for Annabella.

However, Soranzo is not the only one in the play who seeks revenge. Hippolita wants to murder Soranzo for betraying her and so attempts to poison him at his wedding, but she drinks the poison herself after being tricked by Vasques, who displays throughout the play, a most deceitful nature, and his brand of deceit is by far the most dishonorable. He stops at nothing to manipulate people, tricking his victims into believing that he is sincere, sympathetic and trustworthy, and then seeing to it that they are, in his terms, "justly" punished. Thus, he convinced Hippolita that she can trust him with her scheme, and she even believes that he will help her. When she tells him of her plan, he says, "I do not doubt your wisdom, nor, I trust, you my secrecy; I am infinitely yours (III.viii.8-9)." When she offers herself as reward for his assistance and admonishes him to be "true," he says, "I should get little by treachery against so hopeful a preferment as I am like to climb to (III.viii.16-17)," a clever thing to say since it can refer to his future with Soranzo as well as with Hippolita.

Vasques also convinces Soranzo to use kindness with Annabella as a tool for getting her to reveal the name of her lover while he attempts to find out the name of the man from other sources. He then uses deceit to gain the trust of Putana. As Putana weakens, she asks, "Thou wilt stand between me and harm?" To which Vasques answers, "'Ud's pity, what else? You shall be rewarded, trust me (IV.viii.210, emphasis added)." When Putana reveals the name of Annabella's lover, Vasques immediately orders her to be gagged and her eyes put out. So much for trust.

Richardetto is yet another character seeking revenge and, like Hippolita, he wants to see Soranzo dead. To gain his ends, he also resorts to deceit, although he is not as clever or devious as Vasques. Richardetto returns from his voyage in disguise and plots to have Soranzo murdered rather than appearing openly, and tricks Grimaldi into ambushing Soranzo in order to murder him with a poisoned sword rather than confronting him himself. The behavior of both these men can scarcely be called honorable.

Although the plan was to kill Soranzo, Grimaldi accidentally murders Bergetto. When Grimaldi discovers that he has murdered the wrong man, he flees to his uncle, the

Cardinal, who instead of condemning him for murder, protects him from Parma's citizens, who seek justice, and displays a callousness and indifference toward them and the murdered Bergetto:

O, your news
Is here before you; you have lost a nephew,
Donado, last night by Grimaldi slain:
Is that your business? Well, sir, we have
knowledge on't.

Let that suffice. (III.ix.35-38)

Grimaldi's only punishment is that he is sent to Rome. At the end of the play, when Grimaldi discovers the role of each character in the tragedy, he merely banishes Vasques from a country that is not his native land anyway, yet this same Cardinal orders Putana to be burnt to ashes simply for being "of counsel in this incest." It would appear that the Cardinal believed that incest was a far more heinous sin than murder.

The incestuous brother and sister seem to be the most sincere and honorable of the play's main characters. Giovanni's love for his sister appears to be sincere, and it is clear at the beginning of the play that he does not take the sin lightly. In Act I, he confesses his desire for his sister to Friar Bonaventura, who advises him:

Hie to thy father's house, there lock thee fast
Alone within thy chamber, then fall down
On both thy knees, and grovel on the ground:
Cry to thy heart, wash every word thou utter'st
In tears, and (if't be possible) of blood:
Beg Heaven to cleanse the leprosy of lust
That rots thy soul, acknowledge what thou art,
A wretch, a worm, a nothing: weep, sigh, pray
Three times a day, and three times every night.
For seven days' space do this, then if thou find'st
No change in thy desires, return to me: (I.i.69-82)

To this advice Giovanni replies, "All this I'll do, to free me from the rod Of vengeance; else I'll swear by fate's my god (I.i.83-84)." Giovanni's soliloquy in the next scene also indicates that his love is sincere and that he has tried to rid himself of it:

Lost, I am lost: my fates have doom'd my death.
The more I strive, I love; the more I love,
The less I hope: I see my ruin certain.
What judgement or endeavors could apply
To my incurable and restless world
I thoroughly have examined, but in vain:
O that it were not in religion sin
To make our love a god and worship it!
I have even wearied Heaven with prayers, dried up
The spring of my continual tears, even starv'd
My veins with daily fasts: what wit or art
Could counsel, I have practic'd. . . (I.ii.139-149)

If Giovanni had stopped there, deciding to bear the burden of his desire for his sister and acknowledge the sin, he may have retained his honorable stature. However, he chooses instead to rationalize, trying to convince himself that he is above his own religion. Thus, his soliloquy continues: "I find all these but dreams and old men's tales To fright unsteady youth; I'm still the same (I.ii.151-152)." If Giovanni is deceiving anyone, it is only himself. He does not trick or seduce his sister. Instead, he simply declares his love to her and wishes that she loved him. That she is already in love with him is evident in her reply: "Thou hast won The field, and never fought; what thou hast urged My captive heart had long ago resolved (I.ii.240-242)."

However, if Giovanni deceives only himself, it is nonetheless a fatal deception. He grows rather possessive of Anna-

bella and accepts her marriage to Soranzo only because he himself cannot marry her, and a marriage will save her honor. When he learns that Soranzo has discovered the truth and seeks revenge, Giovanni resolves to get revenge first. He goes to speak with Annabella, who tells him that she has repented and is determined to be "honest." With an attitude that resembles the if-I-can't-have-you-nobody-can attitude of a spurned lover, Giovanni kills Annabella, supposedly to prevent Soranzo from taking his revenge on her. He then cuts out her heart, and entering Soranzo's banquet with the heart on his dagger, he mocks Soranzo and then murders him. He is prevented from killing himself by Vasques' men, who do the job for him.

Like Giovanni, Annabella appears to love sincerely. When her brother declares his love for her, she replies, "I blush to tell thee—but I'll tell thee now— For every sigh that thou hast spent for me I have sighed ten; for every tear shed twenty. . . (I.ii.243-245)." She also displays her love and faithfulness in the scene in which Soranzo tries to get her to confess the name of her lover. She does not reveal his name, but only praises him:

This noble creature was in every part
So angel-like, so glorious, that a woman
Who had not been but human, as was I,
Would have kneel'd to him, and have begged for
love. (IV.ii.36-39)

When Soranzo tries to bully her into revealing her lover's name, Annabella exhibits courage and a willingness to accept any fate. Soranzo tries to frighten her by saying:

Doest thou triumph? The treasure of the earth
Shall not redeem thee; were there kneeling kings
Did beg thy life, or angels did come down
To plead in tears, yet should not all prevail
Against my rage! Doest thou not tremble yet?
(IV.iii.64-68)

To this question Annabella replies, "At what? To die? No, be a gallant hangman. I dare thee to the worst: strike, and strike home (IV.iii.69-70)."

Unlike Giovanni, Annabella does not seek revenge and does not forsake religion. She plots no murders and commits only one sin, but that one sin is abhorrent to even the most liberal-minded people. If the sin of the two lovers were simple adultery, the audience would surely sympathize with them, viewing the play as they might view *Romeo and Juliet*. However, Ford has not made things so easy. While Annabella is clearly the least morally flawed character in the play, one cannot overlook the nature of her sin. Thus, the audience is forced to question the moral structure of a society in which forbidden love is a greater sin than the taking of a life, or to acknowledge that Annabella is the better person in the play and therefore say, like the Cardinal, 'tis pity she's a whore.

Carol Churilla

The Influence of Little Erik

There are many people in my life who have influenced me. My mom and dad have had a great influence on me; they have made me what I am today, and I love them very much. However, there is one person who has changed my whole life, and he doesn't even know it.

Before I reveal the person's name, let me explain something about myself. I am nineteen years old and have had cerebral palsy all of my life. I occurred at the time of birth, due to a complication in the delivery procedure. My doctors had no idea as to if I would survive. Even when it

was evident that I was going to live, the doctors were unsure how extensive the damage to my brain was. My parents were told that I may grow up a vegetable.

As I grew, each day held a sort of uncertainty about it. However, I grew up doing everything any normal child does. For example, I learned to walk just as any child does; basically, as the result of my mother getting tired of carrying me. I was well over two years old when I was still being carried, and my parents were beginning to worry. I learned to walk the way any child does; I was placed in the middle of the floor. My mother and father stood on either sides of the room and called to me to walk to them. After much trial and error, I finally reached my father. My father now tells me that he feels the reason I took those steps was because I was mad at them for not picking me up.

I learned to do everything that I'm now able to do by using the same grim determination I used while learning to walk. I do not want to convey the message that my parents were monsters. They are very compassionate and caring people, and I am very grateful to them; without them, I may be a helpless invalid. They have never said that I had to do anything; they just never said I did not have to.

I started encountering problems when I reached school age. I began my school years thinking I was normal. I knew that I was slightly different from my brother and sister; however, because I was treated equally, I did not realize how different I was. I went to school thinking that I was normal, but I soon discovered that many of the other children did not think I was. I began to believe that I was a "weirdo" and a "freak"; therefore, I began to withdraw. Needless to say, when I graduated from high school, I did not have a great deal of confidence in myself.

Then Erik came along. My sister was employed as a babysitter for a family, and she told me that her employer's sister was looking for someone to watch her seventeen month old son during the work week. I was very reluctant to accept this job offer; I had never watched a child before, much less a seventeen month old baby. After much deliberation, I agreed to accept this offer; it turned out to be the best decision I have ever made.

When I first began watching Erik, I was very nervous; he was so little. However, as the days progressed, I became more and more confident. I looked forward to when Sandy, his mother, would bring him. Not only did I become attached to him, but he also became attached to me. He would climb onto my stomach and be contented for hours just watching television with me; we shared many good times together. Although we shared many good times, we also had our share of bad times. Getting through these difficult times gave me the self-confidence that I desperately needed.

Besides giving me self-confidence, Erik has also given me a strong desire to become a mother. Before Erik came into my life, I had a negative attitude toward children. I feel that this was because of experience as a child. However, taking care of Erik has given me a very positive attitude toward children. Before Erik came into my life, I was not even sure that I wanted to have children. However, having children is now one of the most important goals in life.

In the dictionary, influence is defined as the power that a person has over another. Power is usually associated with independency. However, in my case, it was Erik's dependency that has had the greatest influence on me and my life.

Angela Atchison

The Quitter

Of the many things that I am good at, I think the one thing at which I excel, that absolutely stands out above the rest, is quitting. I am a good quitter. No, I am a great quitter. In fact, I'll even go so far as to say that I am an authority on quitting.

There is nothing about quitting that I don't know. I've had almost a lifetime of experience quitting things. You name it, and I've probably quit doing it. I quit smoking, drinking, and popping my gum. I quit biting my fingernails. I quit using caffiene, aspirin, and dexatrim. I no longer drink carbonated sodas, and I've cut down on sugars, cholesterol, and fats. Of course, cutting down is not quitting, but any true blooded quitter knows that 'cutting down' is the first necessary step toward The Big Quit.

The key to successful quitting is to not get discouraged. One cannot be afraid of failing, but must accept, even welcome failure; for each failure, in the process of quitting, is a learning experience. For example, I quit smoking hundreds of times before I actually Quit Smoking.

There are as many types of quitting as there are things to quit. I call the procedure I used to quit smoking The Repeater Quit. It, in my authoritative opinion, is the most successful.

The Start Tomorrow Quit is a nice one. Just as effective is The One Day at a Time Quit and the popular, but painful Cold Turkey Quit. The Tell the World Quit works well, but can be embarrassing if unsuccessful. Sometimes The Secret Quit can save face.

'Quitting' started out as just a game for me. As a child, I quit things for amusement. At age two, I quit sucking my thumb. At ten, I quit playing with dolls. At twelve, I quit hating boys.

Quitting became my favorite hobby. I quit cracking my knuckles, picking misquito bites, and eating between meals. My hobby began to build momentum. Soon, I was at the point where the first thing I did when I woke up in the morning was decide what I was going to quit that day. It wasn't long before I was quitting four, sometimes five, habits a day.

What had started out as an innocent game became a monster. I quit using cyclamates because of the cancer causing possibilities. To preserve the environment, I stopped using leaded gas. I quit using salt for my blood pressure and butter because of its fat. I quit using cream and sugar in my coffee, then I quit drinking coffee. I even quit using spray-can deodorants to keep the ozone intact.

Quitting began using up so much of my time and energy that I could do little else. I realized that I had a problem, and decided to seek help. I went to see a psychiatrist. He told me that I had to stop my obsessive behavior. I quit seeing him. I quit high school, I quit my job, and I quit using creamy style peanut butter.

Those were my 'problem-quitting' days. Fortunately, I've cut down on quitting since then. I'm no longer out of control. Yes, I'm still a quitter. Maybe I'll always be a quitter. Quitting is still my favorite hobby. I enjoy quitting; and I'm good at it. The difference between my 'quit-o-holic' days and now, is that now I'm much more selective about what I quit. There are a lot of things left to quit in this world. Today, I'm going to quit using a hard bristled toothbrush because it is a pain in my gums. Tomorrow, who knows, maybe I'll quit writing essays because it's a pain in my !@#%*!.

Diane D. Olenik Smith

The Skylark Staff was so touched by Donna Strabavy's story and poem, that we would like to dedicate our Children's Section to Brett Anthony Betustak.



As the author of "Cassie's Star," I would like to share with you the purpose and meaning behind this story poem.

On May 10, 1984, Brett Anthony Betustak passed away after a one and one-half year battle with cancer. He was four years old. Brett loved the song, "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star." His idea of Heaven was to be a star in the sky. From this, "Cassie" was born.

As the writer, I want the children who hear this story poem to come to their own conclusion. Hopefully, they will learn that friends can be different, close by, or far away. Of course, they will probably not see the meaning behind "Cassie's Star." It is meant for you, the adult, to share with your children the celebration of Brett's life.

Cassie's Star

My name is Cassie
And I live on a star,
High above the earth—
So far, so far.

Under my star
Amy and Jonathan play,
Running through fields
On a warm summer's day.

They ride their bikes,
Play tag or hike,
Fly kites, bounce balls,
Almost anything they like.

In school they sing songs
Of A B C,
Even count out loud—
One, two, three.

At night they sleep
Cuddled in bed—
Cloud-like pillows
Under their heads.

It must be fun
To be a child below,
But I live on a star
Where I twinkle and glow.

At night I dance
And shine so bright,
Smiling until
I see the sunlight.

During the day
I take a rest,
So when nighttime comes,
I'll be at my best.

Tomorrow Amy and Jonathan
Will visit my star—
I welcome friends
From near and far.

Donna Strabavy

Carrots . . . Yuck!

*I do not want to eat my carrots.
I'm going to feed them to the dog.
Mom says, when something's yours to share it
And I don't want to be a hog.
Maybe I'll stuff them in a napkin
Or flush them down the toilet bowl.
Maybe I'll hide them in my lap then
Bury them in a deep dark hole.
I am not going to eat these carrots!
I will destroy them wait and see.
I will not eat them, I can't bear it
Because I know they're good for me.*

Pam Boilek

Someday

*There's always a person you'll never forget.
A person such as you.
And when that person leaves you,
They'll make you feel down and blue.*

*You want to tell them you miss them,
But they're so far away.
You want to tell them you love them,
Maybe you can. . .*

Someday

Christi M. Garber
Crown Point High School
Age 16

Sunshine

*The sun shines brightly
Through the trees so serenely
In the early noon*

Anthony Alonzo
St. Thomas Moore School
Age 11

See the Sky

*See the stars
They are so bright,
Look at the moon
It's all white,
See the sky
What a pretty sight,
You can see these things
All during night.*

Cindy Brown
Iddings School
Age 9

Waves

*Coming towards the shore;
Higher ever more.
Peaks are curling,
Wrath is hurling
Mist into the sky.
There men's dreams shall fly.
Crashing to the shore,
Shapes the world some more.*

Julie Storbeck
Crown Point High School
Age 15

(Untitled)

*Dreams can really mean a lot. . .
Like Teddy Bears from Care-a-lot,
Could mean you wish that you were there
Or, that you wish all people care.*

*Where would we be without our dreams
To tell us what life really means.*

Tanya Rust
Blessed Sacrament School
Age 12

The Moon

*There was a bright light that night,
It was a glamorous sight,
So bright and gay,
Too bad the moon will only,
Shine till day.*

Megan Evans
Iddings School
Age 10

Natures' Victory

*As the caterpillar
changes to a butterfly—
so will I change.
Awakening and bursting
through our cocoons—
beautiful works of nature.*

Dawn Moore



Photograph by Diane Kablack

BLUEBERRY LANE

By Marion and Elizabeth Pease

Jane, who is seven years old, went to visit her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Green, who lived in Michigan on a farm in Blueberry Lane.

Jane's home is in Arizona and she had looked forward so much to this trip. It was in July that her mother and father decided to drive to Michigan in their car. When they arrived, they found it much cooler, and the trees and grass greener than in Arizona.

On the first day, they drove past many trout streams.

Father said, "I wish I could stop and fish awhile, but I guess I'll wait until we get to Blueberry Lane where there is a trout stream nearby."

At noon, they stopped at a nice hotel, where Jane ate her first lake trout.

"It is good," she said, and she forgot all about the hamburger she had wanted.

As the family travelled northeastward, Father said, "More than half of Michigan is covered with forest." Jane thought this was true, for as far as she could see there were trees everywhere. Mother pointed out some of them—birch, oak, maple, spruce, fir, cedar and pine.

Suddenly, Jane saw several pheasants by the side of the road. "Oh, how beautiful!" she exclaimed. She also saw many other birds—quail, partridges, ducks and a whole flock of wild canaries on some thistle plants. She thought Michigan had the most beautiful birds she had ever seen.

"Still," she said, "Michigan doesn't have a roadrunner. Our roadrunner in Arizona is such a funny bird. He makes me laugh when I see him, running across the desert road."

Jane did, however, see one animal in Michigan that made her laugh. It was a snowshoe rabbit. Her father stopped the car so she could see this rabbit's long feet.

"In winter, the snow gets very deep in Michigan," he said.

"Oh, I see!" said Jane. "Mother Nature has given this rabbit snowshoes so he will not sink in the snow."

"We must be getting near Blueberry Lane," said Mother, "for I see blueberry bushes." Now, Jane knew why her grandparents named their farm Blueberry Lane, for she could see acres and acres of blueberry bushes.

Jane thought, "Tomorrow I'll pick some and surprise everyone. Perhaps Grandmother will make us some blueberry muffins." And if there was one thing Jane liked it was blueberry muffins.

As they drove up the lane to the farmhouse, Jane saw her grandparents sitting on the front porch.

Jane was the first one to get out of the car. She ran up the steps and hugged her grandparents and they hugged her. Everyone talked at once, for there was so much to tell each other.

After dinner, they all sat on the porch, enjoying the pine scented breeze. Then suddenly they saw two deer come to the driveway.

Grandfather said, "These deer come to our driveway everyday at twilight. They are getting quite tame, for no one has ever frightened them."

Soon Jane became very sleepy and went to bed. Before she fell asleep, she thought, "In the morning, I'll ask Grandmother to give me a pail and I'll pick some blueberries for some muffins. And if there was one thing Jane liked it was blueberry muffins."

So next day, Jane asked Grandmother for a pail. Jane said, "I'm going for a walk, and I'll have a surprise for you when I get back."

Grandmother gave her a pail and said, "I like surprises."

First, Jane picked blueberries near the house but she soon found out they were larger in the woods. So on and on she went deeper and deeper into the forest. Then all at once she came upon a big black bear. Jane was so frightened that she ran and ran as fast as she could. But all the while she held on to her little pail of blueberries.

Finally she came to a place so thick with pine trees that she had to stop. And when she looked around, she saw no black bear.

"I guess he was a friendly black bear," she said.

Now she thought, "What way do I go back to Grandmother's?" Jane was lost! Just then, however, a forest ranger came running to her. He knew where Blueberry Lane was and took Jane to her Grandmother.

All the time Jane had held on to her pail of blueberries and guess what they had for dinner—Blueberry Muffins!

Mountains

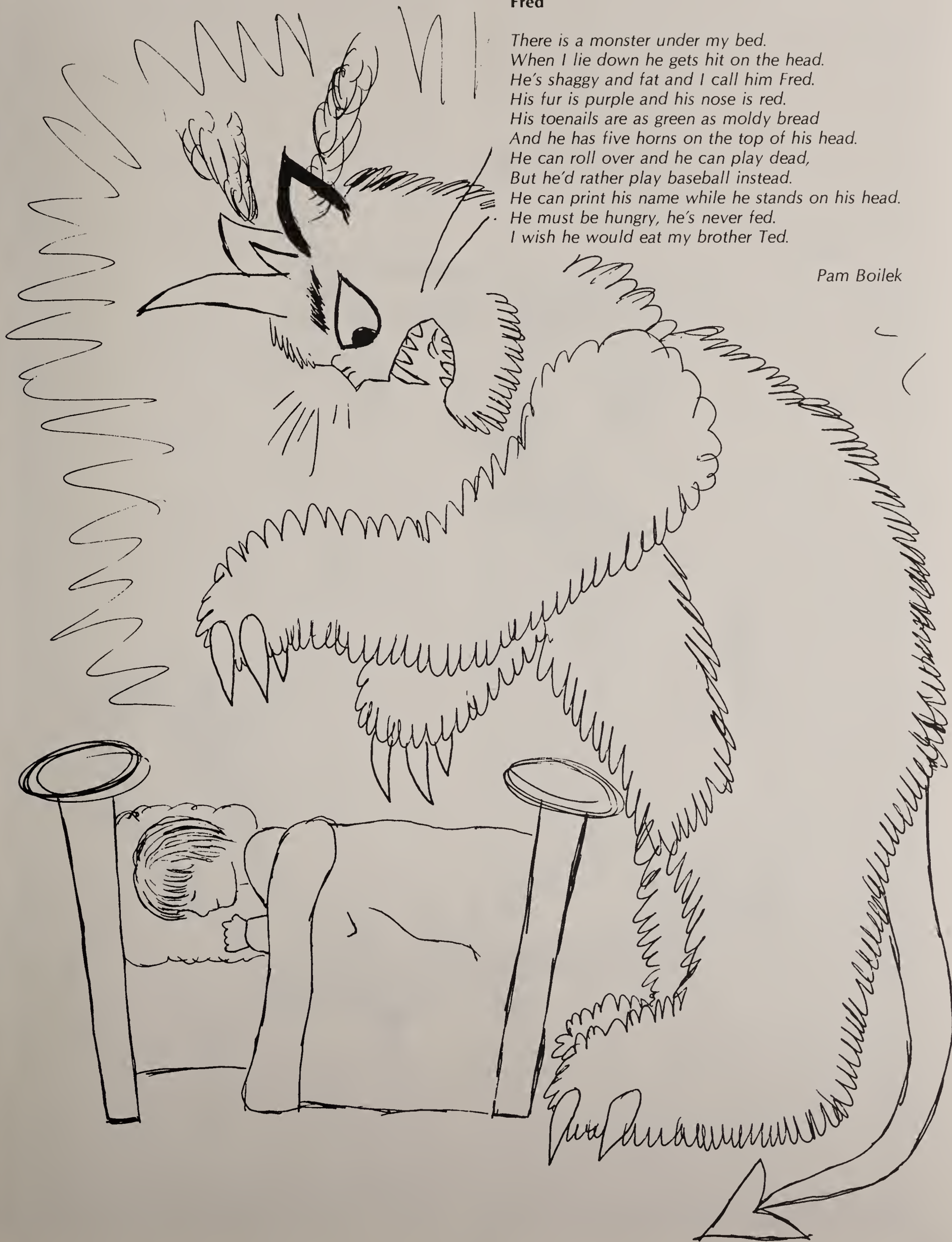
High fabulous hills
Covered with powdery snow
So nice to ski down

Margaret Vlinski
St. Thomas Moore School
Age 10

Fred

There is a monster under my bed.
When I lie down he gets hit on the head.
He's shaggy and fat and I call him Fred.
His fur is purple and his nose is red.
His toenails are as green as moldy bread
And he has five horns on the top of his head.
He can roll over and he can play dead,
But he'd rather play baseball instead.
He can print his name while he stands on his head.
He must be hungry, he's never fed.
I wish he would eat my brother Ted.

Pam Boilek





The Christmas Tree That Fell From Heaven

She left footprints in the white of a December morning. Heavy frost had stiffened the ground as starch stiffened her father's Sunday shirts. Beneath her feet, frozen blades of grass crunched as she crossed the yard, carrying a coal bucket.

The coal was a little hill of blackness in the frost-covered world. Shivering, she quickly filled the bucket with the soft chunks—some pieces cracking in her small hand. She wanted to make only one trip, so she piled it high.

She used both hands to carry the heavy bucket, leaning over with the burden of it. One of her socks slid down, exposing even more of her skin to the cold.

The house was still and quiet in this early part of the day—but an aroma of bacon floated about the child's head. The slick linoleum crackled in the cold under the weight of the girl and her bucket.

Around her, the walls of the sitting room soon danced with shadows and light as the coal caught fire in the cast iron stove. Then, closing the small door, she shut the fire shadows inside the stove. Standing on tiptoe, she adjusted the damper in the stovepipe—then held out her hands to the growing warmth.

"Take off your jacket, child, and help me in here," called her mother from the kitchen.

Hanging her coat by the door, the girl hurried into the other room.

"I smell the coal heat all the way in here," smiled her mother. "Stir the oatmeal for me, Mildred—okay?"

The child moved to do her mother's bidding, leaning close to the metal door to feel the warmth of the oven through her dress. As she stirred the thick mixture, she watched her mother roll biscuits in her hands and pat them down into the pan.

"Mother, I'm awful hungry!"

The boy had entered the kitchen, still pulling his sweater over his head. His eyes were clouded with sleep, and his tousled hair flew out with the electricity of the cold morning. "When do we eat?"

"In a bit, David. Why don't you get your sister and your daddy up?"

"Doris's already up. She run out to the toilet."

Then he was gone as fast as he'd arrived, the sound of his hurrying footsteps echoing in his wake.

"Mildred, please set the table—breakfast is fast getting ready."

The coffeepot on the stove began to perk, filling the room with the smell of breakfast. Soon, the aroma of hot biscuits mingled with that of the coffee.

"Hummmm, smells good in here!"

The father spoke from the door. Laughing, he entered—his presence huskily filling the room. "Morning, honey," he said as he came up behind his wife, his arms enfolding her.

There was warmth and contentment in this room—all except in the eyes of the quiet girl.

The mother had not noticed that her eldest had yet to speak this morning. The young girl had worked with her head down—her eyes filled with something akin to despair.

All through breakfast, Mildred remained quiet—doing as she was told—speaking only with her eyes. Her mother and father never saw, never heard.

Doris watched her sister from across the table. They were only a year apart, ten and eleven—and Doris was already the same height as Mildred. Their faces were on the same level, so Doris looked directly into the troubled eyes.

They stood next to each other as they did the dishes—Mildred washing, Doris rinsing and drying. Doris frowned in the silence—until she could stand it no more.

"Mildred, what's wrong?"

For a moment, there was only the swish of the water over the dishes, then in little more than a whisper came Mildred's voice. "Do you know what day this is?"

Doris pondered, then answered, "Why, I think it's Wednesday." She was puzzled.

"Yes—but wht day! Day of the month!"

More pondering—then, "It's December 20!"

"Doris! It's four days till Christmas!" Mildred's voice was husky now, yet still whispered.

"I know. Is that what's wrong?" Doris' voice held surprise.

Then in a shaky whisper, came the reply, "We don't have a tree!"

"Well, let's go look for one after a while!"

"I already did! I went down into the pasture where old Nell grazes, and I went up past the cottonfield on the other side. There ain't any big enough." Mildred's tone was edged with sadness. She continued, "It won't seem like Christmas if we don't have a tree."

"You're right! We need to find one. . . ." Doris had started to dry the dish in her hand, then paused. "Remember the tree we had last year?" She broke into a wide grin. "It was beautiful!"

Just the thought of happy times in the past began to lift the heaviness from Mildred's heart. "Yeah! Remember when we brought it in the house? It smelled like we'd brought outdoors inside! Didn't it make all the days before Christmas special? When I'd get up in the morning, and run fast to make the fire, I'd stop and look at our tree—and remember. . . it was going to be Christmas! And during the day, I'd hide and make everybody's Christmas presents—and I'd think about the look on your face when you saw them. Then I'd wrap the presents and put them under the tree—so everyone could guess what they were going to get!"

"That's the best—the fun of opening the presents! I always felt sorry for Baby Jesus, 'cause he was too little to see his gifts from the Wise men." Doris smiled as she hung her dish towel on the handle of the stove to dry. "Let's go look for a tree. I'll help—and we'll take David, too." The enthusiasm in Doris' voice reached out to her sister. Mildred felt better.

They quickly finished cleaning the kitchen, talking about how they would find the right tree for their father to cut down. He was working in the cornfield now, harvesting dried fieldcorn. He would have only a short time to cut the tree, for he'd be working the second shift at the textile mill tonight. It would be after midnight when he got home.

For as long as they had lived on this farm, their father had worked all day in the fields, and most of the night in the mill. When they were going to school, they saw him only on the weekends.

Mildred waited outside on the long porch as Doris looked for David. She gazed out past the backyard toward the chickenhouse, where a black snake had stolen all her mother's little yellow chicks last spring—standing up on his tail, swallowing them whole. Her mother had shot his head off while he stood there, a chick half-way down his throat.

Then, there was the barn—the barn with the tin roof. It was good to sit in the straw in the loft when it rained. The sound was like a million horses galloping. . . galloping—going nowhere.

Last year, when they'd moved here from North Carolina, Mildred had been certain that she would never like this

place. It was full of red mud! This mud of South Carolina—it was so different from the mountains she had grown up in. There were hills here, and a few trees. Not the big tall pines and buckeyes—but ‘simmons’ and cedars—cedars too little to cut for Christmas.

“We’re ready, Mildred! I told Mother where we’re going,” said Doris suddenly, coming up on her from behind. “Let’s go!”

“Yep—let’s go!” said David, running out in front of them, pulling his coat on.

“Mildred, do you think David knows about Santa Claus?” whispered Doris behind her hand as they followed him.

“What do you mean?” Mildred whispered back.

“That there’s no Santa Claus? Do you think he knows?”

“He’s eight years old now. . . he probably does.”

“Wanta ask him?”

“Okay,” Mildred said quietly, and then louder, “David, wait up!”

David had a stick in his hand, bouncing it along the barbed wire that fenced in the pasture. He called over his shoulder, “Don’t be slow-pokes—catch up!”

The girls ran and then slowed to a walk, one on either side.

“David, what do you think about Santa Claus? Think he’ll come on Christmas?” Mildred spoke to her brother, looking first at him, then to Doris.

David looked straight ahead—not saying anything for a minute. Then slowly, he said, “Well, I wanted a cowboy gun last year, and he didn’t bring it—and I was pretty good all year. . . well, almost all year! All we got under the tree was some candy and stuff.”

Now all three children were quiet. The only sound was the slapping of the stick on wire. Suddenly, the boy stopped and turned to his sisters. “The kids at school say that there’s no Santa Claus at all!” The words burst out of him. “And I figger they’re right! But I’m not agonna tell Mother! She thinks that there is—so, don’t you go and tell her different!”

It was all the girls could do to keep straight faces. With huge smiles they spoke together.

“We won’t tell!” said Doris.

“You bet!” said Mildred.

All morning the children searched for their Christmas tree. They found straggly bushes, but not the tree they wanted. Not one cedar was big enough.

Three unhappy children showed up for lunch. Their mother had watched them from afar; she had three large glasses of milk ready when they came in.

“Mother, what are you cooking? . . . cake?” David’s spirits rose as he entered the cinnamon-smelling kitchen. He ran to the counter near the sink. “No! It’s pies—apple pies! Oh, boy!”

Mother smiled, and put an arm around his shoulders. “After lunch you can have a piece. Your dad will be here soon. You kids wash your hands and drink your milk.”

Mildred walked to the kitchen window and looked out at the field of sagebrush in back of the house. Absently, she remembered the games of hide and seek they’d played this past fall, and the smell of the dead sage where she’d lain hidden while David looked for her.

“Mildred.” Her mother was beside her.

“We didn’t find a tree, Mother. We looked all over. What can we do?”

“Don’t worry, honey—we’ll talk to Dad.”

The mother waited on the porch for the father. The sun was hot on her auburn head, but the wind wrapped a chill around her like a shawl. She pulled her sweater closer.

He smiled to find her waiting for him. He had seen her hair shining from a long way down the road. His heart moved with her skirt as it fluttered in the hands of the wind.

“Frank, these kids have searched all morning for a Christmas tree. Are there none anywhere on this lane?”

“They were cut weeks ago to be sold in town—but there must be one left!” He hugged her close, kissing her cheek. “Mr. Owens must’ve left one, at least.”

“It means so much to them—especially Mildred. She’s the oldest—and I think she puts great store in having a big tree. She loved the old home so much, and misses the mountains so!”

The husband walked beside his wife, his face turned thoughtfully toward the lower pasture. Then he put his arm around her waist, and they entered the house.

“So you kids couldn’t find a tree, huh!”

Looking immense, the father sat the head of the table. His curly dark hair fell over his suntanned forehead. His sleeves were rolled up on his forearms, showing heavy muscles. His even, white teeth flashed now as he grinned at his children. “Now, you don’t think I’d let a Christmas go by without a tree, do you? I’ll take the morning off tomorrow and we’ll all go find one!”

“Yippee!” whooped David, jumping off of his chair and dancing around the table.

“Where, Dad? We looked all over the pasture. Can we buy one, do you think?” said Mildred.

The smile left the father’s face as he slowly shook his head. “Sorry, honey—there’s no money to spend on a tree. We’ll just have to get one of the little ones down in the lower pasture.”

Mildred knew this was the only answer. She accepted the fact. Trying to hide her disappointment, she said, “Well, we’ll just not need as many decorations.” She tried to smile.

“You got the right idea, honey!” Her dad took a bit of his apple pie. “This shore is good, Cannie.”

Ahead of them ran the boy—stopping only once in a while to wait for them. The girls walked fast to keep up with the father’s long steps.

Mildred watched her dad with silent hopes as he scanned each hill they crossed. On his shoulder rested the handsaw, the sunlight bouncing off the blade, hurting her eyes.

Doris slipped her hand into her sister’s, giving her a quiet smile. They walked together, hand in hand.

They searched the upper pasture, up one hill and down another. No tree.

It was near lunchtime when they finally found themselves in the lower land—near the creek. The trees suddenly grew taller—too tall. The limbs stretched wide and reached for the sky, not leaving any room at all for little trees. The pine branches bunched, densely swallowing the sun. The pine-needled ground underneath was soft and damp.

“Well, kids—looks like we’re outta luck! Best we start back, and get a little one on the way. I gotta go to work soon.”

Mildred’s eyes darkened, and Doris watched the darkness overflow. The older girl turned her face away, and then started for home.

Mildred walked fast, climbing quickly. At the top of a hill, she turned to watch the rest follow in her footsteps. Her face dry now, the disappointed girl shaded her eyes from the sparkle of the sun. It’s rays danced off her father’s sawblade, sending its shine off in all directions—to the sky, to the low land, to the tops of the trees.

Suddenly, the girl’s eyes widened in the surprise of discovery. Her heart beat fast, and she swallowed once—then

twice.

"Dad! Stop!"

She ran down the hill, the wind in her face—her hair flying. "It's there—I see it!"

He saw her hope and halted his climb, waiting for her. "Where is it?" he said.

"There!" The girl's hand pointed up—way up.

And he saw it.

"Doris, David!" he called. Come here!"

They came running.

"Stand over on the crest of that hill and watch."

In almost no time, the father had climbed up the huge white pine. Near the top he sawed at the trunk, the flash of the blade like a star in the sky.

There was a sudden swishing sound in the limbs—there was a strong smell of resin—and a tree toppled green from above.

In minutes, the father was standing on the soft ground—at the edge of the creek. He stood the tree up—it rose above his shoulders. The limbs were full and plentiful. The father turned his gaze to his three children. "Doris, David!" he said. "Here it is! Your sister's found our Christmas tree—the top of a white pine."

The eldest child turned her eyes toward her father—the man with the sparkling sawblade. Then her gaze moved to the tree. In her imagination, she could see its branches alight with decorations—popcorn strings, bright paper chains, and gingerbread men.

Then, she began to understand. Now, the new home in the red dirt of the low land didn't seem quite so bad. As she moved her hand through the soft green needles of the tree, her fingers sensed the feel of the earth, the rain, and the sky—and she thought that if you climb high enough, maybe you'll find your dream—wherever you are.

The young girl smiled, and then in almost a whisper, she said to the others, "Our Christmas tree—it's almost as if it's fallen from heaven."

Doris and David looked at each other and nodded.

Smiling, the father swung the tree up over his shoulder, taking the first step toward home.

Amy Garza

Haikus

Winter is a nice
time, a time for sharing and
giving; a fun time.

Ocean beautiful
warm, blue, light blue, light green, green;
it is like a bath.

I like mirrors; they
are very special because
you can see yourself.

Cliff Bingham
Timothy Ball School
Age 7

Heading South

Birds singing up high
Swiftly gliding through the sky
Heading south. Oh my!

Vickie Clifford
St. Thomas Moore School
Age 10

Death

The sorrow endured,
While the bottle it lured,
During the hour preceding,
The anticipation to me leading,
Put to my lips, sweet as divine,
Eternity passed, my heart felt fine.

Into my shirt, and on with my pants,
Ninety-five and over was the chance,
Filled with liquor, I drove like hell,
Turned into the drive, all was well,
The idea tonight, was to give her a ring,
She showed at the door, and off we went,
Handed her the ring, and her emotions were sent.

Lovely she dressed,
The pedal harder I pressed,
Slower, slower I was told,
Then the event began to unfold.

Red lights flashing,
My mind dashing,
The car roaring,
Hit the brakes, and sent soaring,
Into a tree, over a wall,
For eternity did we fall,
Into a basin, over the edge,
Then we ceased, on a thin ledge.

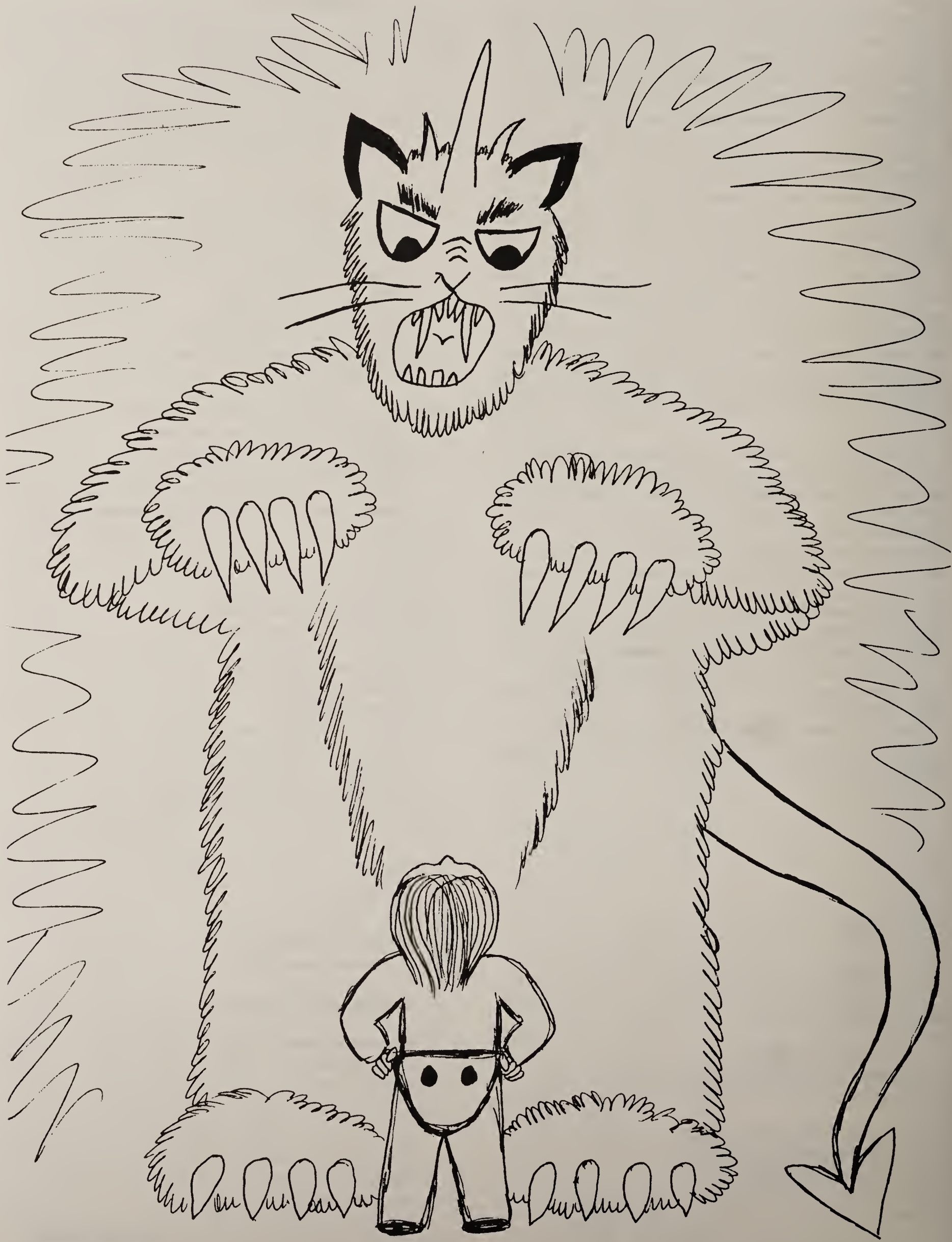
She was cold and blank,
All because I drank,
The sorrow I feel,
The death was real.

Sitting with my flask,
Wishing for a mask,
In my own mind,
Looking for feelings to find.

She was so sweet,
I was her defeat.
I was so cruel,
She was mine to rule.

Her love was so true,
Her love I did pursue,
Her love was so divine,
Her death was also mine.

Tom Antczak
Crown Point High School
Age 15



Grizztoffleez the Gruzz

dedicated to Jeremy & Matthew

Danny knew it was midnight, but he just couldn't sleep;
He tried to relax and he tried counting sheep.
He decided he might like some water to drink,
But something was strange and before he could blink
He saw that his closet had a weird greenish glow,
So he climbed out of bed quite careful and slow.
He tiptoed to the closet and opened the door,
Then he saw something he couldn't ignore.
There stood a monster huge and hairy.
"I'm a terrible monster! I'm very scary!"
It growled in thunderous monster tones.
I'll eat your flesh and crunch your bones!
My name is Grizztoffleez the Gruzz.
I'm the meanest beast that ever was."
Danny looked at the monster with eyes full of pity.
"You don't scare me, you silly kitty.
Now, why don't you give up and go home?
Just take your things and leave this poem!"
"You're surely scared of my fangs sharp and white
And my eyes that are glowing so red and bright!"
"No, I'm not scared at all," Danny said.
"I'm tired and I'm going back to bed."
"Halt!" growled the Gruzz. "I'm not yet through!
Don't you see I'll make a meal out of you?
I have large teeth and long sharp claws.
I could knock you down with my massive paws.
Now, you must be afraid of the horns on my head
Or my tail so pointed, long, and red!"
"Nope," said the little boy with a yawn.
"And I want you out of my room by dawn.
Now don't leave a mess or my mom will shout.
If she yells at me I'll punch your lights out!"
Then little Dan went back to bed
While the beast in the closet scratched his head.
"I'll have to try this just once more."
So he took a deep breath and began to roar.
He howled, he growled, he stomped his feet,
But little Dan was fast asleep.
Then Grizztoffleez stood over Danny's bed.
Smoke poured from his ears and his eyes glowed red.
"Wake up, little boy!" thundered the beast,
But Danny didn't even stir in the least.
"Well, I'll be tickled!" the monster said.
Then tail between his legs, he fled.
The Gruzz never bothered Danny again,
But went on to the closets of other young men.
He only remains when they show they're afraid.
Stand up to the Gruzz and away he will fade—
So this is the secret to beating the Gruzz,
The meanest beast that ever was.

Pam Boilek

Where The Dwarves Live

Purple moonbeams;
Orange skies;
Three Saturn rings
Around every moon.
Sea-green ponds
Turning to bright fuschia
In tiny ripples
Reaching toward the shore.
Fairies dancing
While dwarves sing
Ancient melodies
of magic and truths.
Flowers bending—
Their red and yellow stalks
Moving in time
To rainbow notes which float through dreams.
Centaur and unicorns—
White foxes and blue hares—
Fauns and tiny Thumbelinas—
Flower princes and dryads.
A golden lion
Watches over all,
And teaches them love
Where the dwarves live.

Carol Mills

The Sun and the Moon

The sun and the moon
Are all alike they
Both shine so bright
But one shines in the
Day and one shines
At night.

Homer Baldazo
Iddings School
Age 9

KIDchen Rules

LOOK HERE KIDS, this is for you!
Learn each rule and obey it too!
Working hard is not a thrill.
So keep it clean and wipe your spill.
Wash the dishes as you should.
Sweep the floor and mop it good.
Put things back into their place.
Too much grease is just a waste.
Wipe the 'frig., stove and all.
Don't forget cabinets or the wall.
Keep appliances clean and bright.
Do the kitchen once and right.
Don't forget to watch the lights.
Turn them off, I pay the price.
Take out trash and leave no food,
To keep this mom in best of mood!

Carolyn Richter

A ate some apples from the top of a tree.
B batted in baseball with you and with me.

*C caught a catfish in the lagoon.
D danced with F on the deck near the moon.*

E especially likes to eat everything.
F fa-la-la'd which is his way to sing.
G grew real tall, right up to the sky.

*H had a headache and started to cry.
I was quite ill and felt really bad.*

*J jumped for joy and never was sad.
K flew a kite that he made from a kit.*

*L looked at the lamp that was already lit.
M married a mockingbird who knew how to fly.*

*N was a nurse an helped H and I.
O opened boxes with big oranges inside.*

*P played hide and seek and found a place to hide.
Q quickly quieted a mean howling fox.*

R ran for cover from big rolling rocks.
S swam in the sea and saw a great shark.

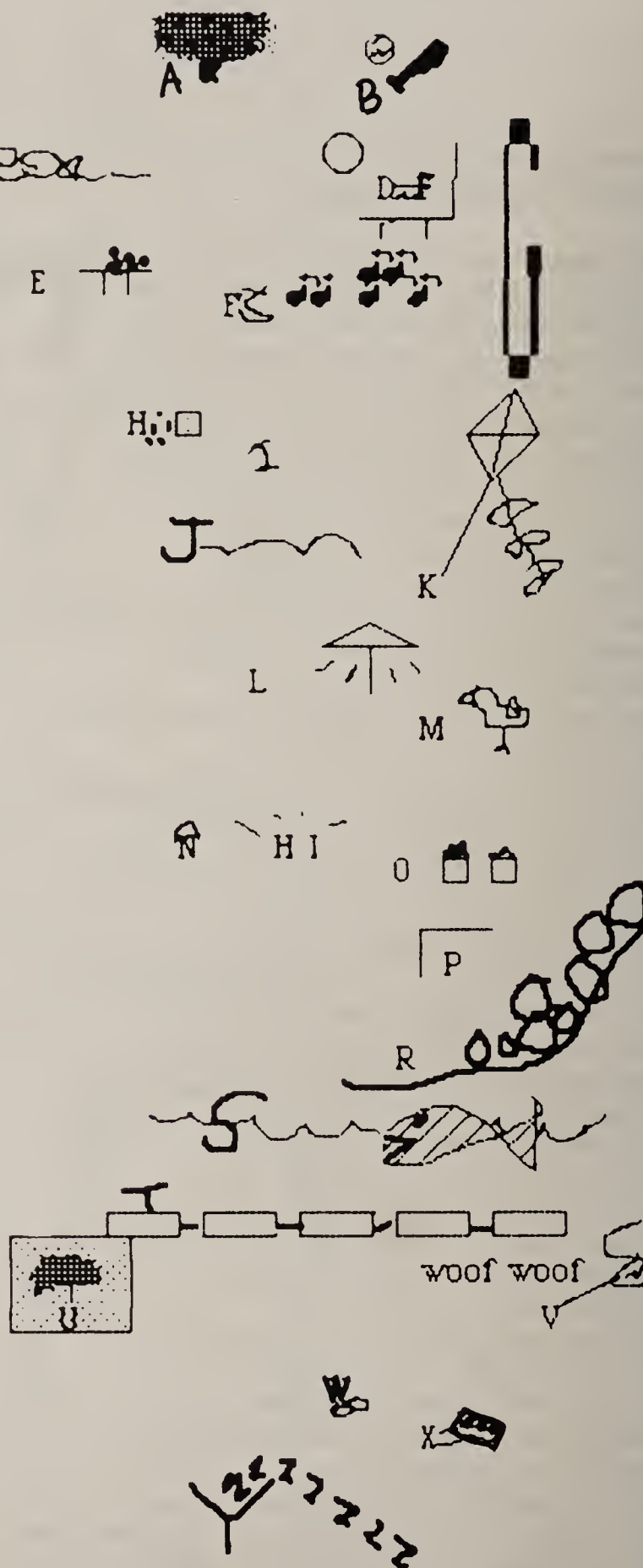
T took a train and went out to the park.

U used an umbrella out in the rain.
V volunteered to walk a Great Dane.

W went walking and wore his new shoes.
X used his xylophone to sing the blues.

*Y yawned a big yawn and went to sleep—
Zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz.*

Linda Simon
Andrean High School
Age 18



On her mountain
so far above the world
lives a never-ceasing hawk,
always screeching—
calling out to everyone
my faults.
Her sharp claws
stabbing deep in my heart,
in my very soul
leaving scars
that will never heal.

Bunny

Bunny, bunny, on the ground,
Find somewhere to stay.
Find somewhere to cuddle,
So you're not in the way.
Find someplace where you can rest,
So that you can be at you're very best.
Find somewhere where it is warm,
So that your babies can be born.

Stacey M. Little
Homer Iddings School
Age 10



Drawing by Dale Fleming

Reflections on a Summer Past

Sun-drenched skin,
lighthearted smiles,
fits of laughter.
Exhaustion
brought on by intense fun
and the pleasant exertion of emotional energy.

Nightly campfires
melted our hearts toward one another
and created burning feelings
never to be replaced.

Tender kisses
under a cool, dark, star-filled sky;
as rhythmic breath
was heard from within the tents.

Eyes reluctantly opened
as the first morning sunshine
streaked through the tent screens.
Anticipation created adrenaline.

We relished
what was of utter importance;
for it had no importance.
How much chocolate and how much vanilla?
Go to the beach or
read a book in the campground?
Look for firewood or
make a salad?
How much biking and how much swimming?

Experience
entwined our minds.
Careless cares,
emotion took priority over
all.

Delicate glass bubbles
shattered on that last day—
Previous peace of mind
swimming in a pool of tears.

My heart grips tightly
to memories,
the only remnant of my state of being
this summer.

The Monster in My Closet

There is a monster in my closet.
He's going to eat me, I don't know why.
I didn't do a thing to cause it
And I am much too young to die.
He's mean and ugly, big and fierce.
His teeth are green, his ears are pierced.
He's furry and strong and awfully smelly.
He breathes hot fire and spits grape jelly.
Oh save me from this thing in my closet!
He plans to eat me, but I won't let him.
I don't know what I did to cause it,
But with my Care Bear I'm going to get him.

Pam Boilek

Sarah J. Moskowitz
University of Chicago High School
Age 17

The Melancholy Memorandum

I take the box off the shelf
And set it down before me;
Like a child playing by herself,
But that's not what I'm doing.

"Will this longing never end?"
I ask myself in sorrow
And then I reach inside the box;
One letter I must borrow.

I choose a slip at random.
It's my very favorite one!
And I open it and smile
And I read it 'till it's done.

You're writing me you love me
And you wish that I was there
Since your new girlfriend won't suit you
'Cause she doesn't really care.

You say you love me more than here;
Back then I cried of joy!
You knew I really loved you,
So you thought I was your toy.

But I wasn't and I'm not!
And yet I loved you still—
And as I put that box away,
I know I always will.

Julie Storbeck
Crown Point High School
Age 15

A Perfect Example

I never look back at it,
But it's always in front of me.
It's always worth the hurt,
But I know it's hurting me.
I'll never let go of it,
Because it's all that's going for me.
I'll put it in the past,
When the past is history.
A perfect example is
All the things it's done to me.
I think I might lose my mind,
—But not my memory.
A perfect example is
What we all wish we could be.
I think I might lose my mind,
But not the memory
—It means too much to me.

Erin Culledge
Crown Point High School
Age 17

Winter Snow

When I
walk out
of the house. . .

I smell
the clean
fresh air.

All I hear
is peace
and quiet.

It looks
so white
and clear.

When I
taste the
nice cold
snow. . .

I
feel
a
little
cold

Beth Menniger
Iddings School
Age 9

Candle Life

I
am the candle
burned
at both ends
left
to melt away
alone.
My wick was lit;
destructive
was the match.
Life
burns so quick.
Wax
is all I am.

Dawn Moore

Love's Generation

Baby lies at mother's breast.
She would lay him down to rest,
But she knows that he'd protest
'Cause baby loves his mother's breast.

Child clings to mother's side.
When trouble strikes, he's there to hide;
It's where his tears are all dried,
So child needs his mother's side.

Young man feels his mother's hand
'Cross his face as reprimand.
Better now he'll take commands,
And young man learns from mother's hand.

Grown man rests in mom's embrace,
Comforted from his disgrace.
Tears still vanish from his face
When grown man feels his mom's embrace.

Old man sees his mother go;
Buried deep beneath the snow.
Only this old man can know,
The pain to see his mother go.

Julie Storbeck
Crown Point High School
Age 15

Memories Of You

dedicated to Debbie Heneghan

At times my life feels so empty
My heart aches with memories of you,
Your smile and sparkling eyes.
Where are you, what do you think about?
Come sit, tell me your troubles
Do you feel empty too?
I remember little things,
They are so important to me.
—A tear, to wash away sad memories.
A smile to bring back the good.
How are you, how do you feel?
Where are your thoughts, with whom?
Do you regret letting go?
My regrets eat me away,
Leaving me to bleed inside.
My choice, was it right or wrong?
I try to leave the past behind
To think of today. . . tomorrow
God. I need you, love you and miss you.
At times my life feels so empty.
My heart aches.
—Memories of you.

Erin Culledge
Crown Point High School
Age 17



Drawing by Denise Maxwell
Age 17
Hobart High School

My Experience in the Haunted House

On Halloween Night I had a horrifying experience in the Haunted House. As I entered the house I heard loud, blood curdling screams. Next, I heard pounding footsteps coming closer to me. I stood still in shock. A creepy old man, with dark eyes, approached me. He wore old and worn clothes. His bony hand, covered with dry wrinkled skin, grabbed my arm. In a crackling deep voice he moaned "come with me." I broke out in a cold sweat. After jerking my arm away from the man, I ran out of the house as fast as I could. The fear that night was enough to last for the next ten Halloween nights.

Tina King
Thornton Fractional North

Halloween Night

Sometimes we like to pretend that strange and terrible things are near just for the thrill. Halloween is one of those times when just the mention of ghosts, witches, and goblins sends shivers down the spine. On this Black Night the wind blows the flickering candle inside the jack-o-lantern and children scurry along the pathway that leads to the haunted house on the hill. Up on the hill, strange cries can be heard on the night wind. Weird faces can be seen peering out from every window and doorway. What terrible evil lurks in the shadows on the night when spirits walk and creatures hide away not to come out until the pale dawn creeps! Then the return of day once more brings back a safe and secure world. Gone are the evil spirits until Halloween comes once again.

Robert Gilkey
Thornton Fractional North

Lugene's Birthday in the Sky

For a minute or two Lugene Morgan couldn't stand it. It was Saturday morning. He didn't have to go to school. Yet, he was wide awake and it was only 6:00 a.m.

A ray of sunshine streamed through the bedroom window and created a warm spot on his cheek. He pulled the covers over his head and rolled away from the sunbeam.

Then. . . WHAM! It struck him. He remembered.

Today was his birthday! Today he was 12 years old. Not only that. . . today he was going for his first ride in an airplane. His mother, Pauline, had promised it as a birthday present.

"Wowee!" Lugene let out a scream and leapt out of bed. He rushed to the window. The late spring sun shone brightly. The trees were resplendent in their new leaves. Birds sang in the trees. Squirrels scampered across the lawn.

Gosh! It was a beautiful day. "Wowee!" Lugene screamed again.

He banged on his sisters' bedroom as he rushed to his mother's room.

"Cut that out, Lugene," said his sister, Carla.

"Mama's gonna get you for waking us up," said Cheyenne, his youngest sister.

Lugene didn't care what they said. He rapped loudly on his mother's bedroom door.

"Who's that?" his mother asked.

"It's Lugene, mom. Time to get up."

"Lugene. Get back to bed this minute."

But, mom, today is my birthday. You're taking me for an airplane ride, remember?"

Yes, but not for several hours. Get back to bed, boy."

"Aw, mom. Can I please come in?"

"O.K., come on in."

Pauline was nestled snugly in bed. Only her head protruded from beneath the covers. "Happy birthday, Lugene," she said, smiling. "Now, you get back to bed. Get at least another hour's rest before breakfast. And don't disturb your sisters."

"Aw, mom. Do I really have to go back to bed?"

"Yes. You go back to bed this minute. Don't worry. The airplane won't disappear. It'll still be there when we arrive."

At breakfast Lugene could think of only one thing. . . airplanes. He brought out his books and magazines about airplanes and pored through them.

"Lugene, your eggs are getting cold," his mother said as she bustled between the stove and dining table.

"Carla, did you know that the Harrier jet. . ."

"Don't bother me about airplanes, Lugene. I'm eating."

"Shannon. If a Boeing 727 goes. . ."

Shannon gave him a withering look. "Don't bother me while I'm eating, Lugene," she said.

"Lugene!" his mother said sharply. "Today is your birthday, kid, but don't overdo it."

Paula and Cheyenne giggled.

Lugene hunched over his eggs and attacked them with his fork. He looked pityingly at his sisters. Girls! How could they understand? They just couldn't really understand about airplanes. But wait until I'm a pilot. They'll see. They'll see.

After breakfast he went back to his room and leafed through his books. He knew his mother was taking him to a municipal airport and surmised his ride would be in one of the small trainers used by the flying school. He got out his Snoopy the Red Baron button and pinned it to his windbreaker. He pinned on a U.S. Air Force insignia and NASA decal. He looked in the mirror. The windbreaker had been transformed into a flight jacket. Thus attired, he sauntered jauntily downstairs to watch television.

Lugene and his four sisters piled into the family's new Cadillac Eldorado for the drive to the airport. He sat in the place of honor—up front. Pauline got in the car, started the engine, and away they went. Lugene tried to look important. He hoped some of his friends would be outdoors and see him. 'How come they were never around when you wanted them to see you?' he thought.

As the Gary Municipal Airport came into view Lugene's heart started pounding. 'Boy, I hope I don't look nervous,' he thought.

"Are you neverous, Lugene?" asked Paula.

Lugene turned and give her a disdainful look. "Of course not," he said.

"Then why is your voice trembling?" asked Shannon.

"I'm NOT nervous!"

"Lugene is nervous. Lugene is nervous," chorussed Paula and Cheyenne.

"All right, girls. Cut it out," their mother said sharply.

The big car turned into the airport and drove up to one of the hangers. A Cessna P-210 was being pushed inside.

"Well, Eugene, here we are," his mother said as she pulled into a stop. "You girls wait in the car. I won't be long."

Pauline and Eugene went inside the office. A young man in blue flight coveralls greeted them.

"Hello, Mrs. Morgan. I take it this is Eugene?"

"Yes, Mr. White. This is Eugene."

"Well, happy birthday, kid. Your mom got you a real nice present."

"Hi," Eugene said. "Boy, I'm really glad. What kind of airplane are we going up in?"

"It's a . . ."

"Eugene knows a lot about airplanes, Mr. White," Pauline interrupted.

"Ahh, yes. O.K., kid. Come over here. See the blue and white plane by hanger Number Three?"

Yes, sir."

"Well, that's it."

"Piper Tomahawk," Eugene said proudly. "It's a twin seat trainer."

Jim White looked at Eugene in surprise. "No kidding? O.K. What's that next to it?"

The boy studied the red and gold aircraft for a minute. "It's a Cessna 210 Centurion. Beside it is a Grob 109B Motorglider with folding wings. At the far end of the hanger is a twin engine Piper Cheyenne III."

"Very impressive. Your son really knows airplanes, Mrs. Morgan."

"I told you. He reads about airplanes all the time."

Eugene was pleased with himself. He wished his sisters could hear what Jim had said about him. He wished some of his school friends could see him now. Boy, would they be jealous!

"Well, are we ready?" Jim asked. He had Pauline fill out some forms. He opened a cabinet, took out a cap and aviator sunglasses. "Here, put these on, Eugene."

The boy could hardly believe his eyes. The cap had a Piper logo and the glasses were real aviator glasses. He put them on and was ready to conquer the skies.

"Gee, thanks, Mr. White," he said.

"Call me Jim, Eugene, O.K.?"

"Sure. Thanks."

"O.K. Let's go. Mrs. Morgan, you're welcome to wait in the office."

"No, I think I'll wait outside with my daughters. We want to see you take off anyway."

"Come on, Eugene. Let's take to the sky."

Eugene stood before the Piper PA38-12. For a moment the stubby, bubble-topped airplane took on the sleek, menacing lines of a Harrier jump jet—its underbelly laden with rockets and bombs. He walked closer, touched the engine cowling lightly. A gentle shock seemed to go through his body. He heard a high-pitched whine and saw a Canadair executive jet float to a landing on a far runway.

He followed Jim around the Tomahawk, checking the tires, struts, rudder, ailerons and flaps. Jim pointed everything out to Eugene and stressed the importance of the preflight ground check. Then they got into the airplane.

Eugene tried to be cool. He settled into the seat, buckled his seatbelt, adjusted the seat and looked around the cockpit.

"Everything O.K., Eugene?"

"You bet, Jim."

"Good. Here are your basic gauges. That's your air speed indicator. . . It tells you how fast you're going.

That's your altimeter. . . it tells you your height; not really from the ground, but from sea level. That's your compass . . . tells you in which direction you're flying. That other gauge tells you your horizontal bearing or attitude. It shows if you're flying level and straight or banking, which means turning, either way. The other gauges are for engine performance. As a safety feature there are two of everything."

"Reading about all this is a lot different from seeing it all up close."

"Now, Eugene, the foot controls on the floor steer the airplane on the ground. The steering wheel—it used to be called a joystick in the old days—is almost like the one in your mother's car. Turn it left and the airplane banks left. Turn it right and the airplane banks right. To increase your speed, you push it into the panel. To decrease your speed, you pull it out towards you. O.K.?"

Eugene nodded. He touched his wheel lightly.

The radio crackled. Eugene jumped.

Jim smiled. "I still do that sometimes," he confessed. "Put your headphones on." He switched on the engine and it vibrated to life after a few coughs.

Eugene felt the vibrations and watched the spinning propeller in fascination.

"Tomahawk 2413-G, this is the control tower. Do you read me?"

"Roger. I read you," replied Jim.

"Tomahawk 2413-G. . . taxi to Runway 30 for takeoff."

"Roger. Tomahawk 2413-G taxiing to Runway 30 for takeoff."

Jim eased the throttle forward and the airplane inched ahead. He taxied slowly out to Runway 30 and turned into the wind.

"How's everything so far, Eugene?"

"It's O.K."

Jim raced the engine to 1,800 rpm's with the brakes on. The airplane strained to leap forward. He checked the magneto and gauges, tested the ailerons and flaps.

"Tomahawk 2413-G. . . wind is 270 at 10 knots. Altitude reading is 571 feet. You are cleared for takeoff."

"Roger, control. O.K., Eugene, here goes."

Jim eased the steering column forward and the airplane started moving down the runway. Eugene looked outside and saw the hangers rushing past. He saw his mother and sisters waving as they disappeared behind him. He could feel the bumpiness of the runway, and the concrete seemed like one long blur.

"Eugene, we're hitting takeoff speed now. That's between 65 and 70 knots for this airplane. That's about 80 miles per hour."

Eugene suddenly became aware that the earth was swiftly falling away beneath them. He clutched the seat and glanced sharply at Jim for an instant.

Jim squeezed his shoulder and reassured him with a smile. He made a gentle banking turn to the right and pointed downwards. Eugene looked down and saw his mother and sisters, tiny figures by the car, waving.

Still gaining altitude, Jim banked away from the airport, skirted the big Inland Steel Mill and headed out over Lake Michigan.

Eugene watched in fascination as the houses gave way to sand dunes and the water. He never knew Lake Michigan was so large. It seemed to stretch away forever. The airplane suddenly rocked, buffeted by the cross currents above the lake.

Jim steadied the airplane. "That's called turbulence,"

he said. "It's mostly caused by the extremes of temperature generated by the steel mills along the lake. He climbed out of the turbulence and made a wide turn out over the lake. He came in over the northern end of Gary, followed some railroad tracks for awhile, crossed the interstate highway and banked lazily towards the lake once more.

Lugene looked down and saw the cars and trucks like toys speeding along the highway. He spied an Amtrack train zooming along and thought how much it looked like a table-top model. A flock of seagulls wheeled by beneath the airplane.

"O.K., Lugene, how about taking over?"

Lugene was startled. "I don't think I'm ready yet."

"Aw, come on. You can do it. It's easy now that we're up in the air. Go ahead. Take over."

Lugene held the wheel stiffly in both hands. He felt the vibration of the engine. He held the wheel steady for awhile and then experimented with a slow turn to the right. The airplane did a lazy banking turn and began losing altitude.

"Nose up," Jim said. "Push it in and tilt back to you. That's it. That's it. Right on the button."

Lugene felt good. It was easier... much easier than he'd thought. He put the airplane in a slow turn to the left and headed for the shore.

"Very good. Very good," Jim said.

The Red Baron swopped in front of Lugene and the boy lined him up in his sights. "Daka-daka! POW!" Lugene exclaimed.

Jim snapped around in surprise.

Lugene smiled, embarrassed. "I just shot down the Red Baron," he said apologetically.

Jim laughed out loud. "Hey! That's great, kid. Some imagination. Some imagination. All right, let's take her back to the airport."

Lugene searched for the airport but couldn't find it.

"We'll fly west along the lake until we see the Inland mill, then turn south for the airport," Jim explained. "Check your compass."

Lugene did as he was told and, before he knew it, saw the airport dead ahead.

"O.K. I'll take over now," Jim said.

Suddenly there was a loud CRASH! CRASH! as two seagulls slammed into the windshield. The plexiglass shattered and filled the cockpit with particles. One of the seagulls smashed into Jim's face.

"Oh, my God!" Jim cried out. "I can't see a thing!"

For a moment Lugene panicked and the airplane gave a sluggish lurch.

"Steady the plane, Lugene. Don't let her stall. Don't let her stall."

The books and magazines flashed before Lugene's eyes. He saw his mother, just her head showing from beneath the covers. "Happy birthday, Lugene," she was saying softly. Then everything cleared.

Lugene switched the radio to send. "Mayday! Mayday!" he called urgently. "This is Tomahawk 2413-G... Mayday! Mayday!"

He put the airplane's nose gently down and slowly increased his speed to pull out of the threatened stall. Regaining control, he pulled the nose up and banked away from the airport.

"Control tower to Tomahawk 2413-G... please confirm Mayday."

"Affirmative. Mayday affirmative," Lugene replied. "I

have an injured pilot aboard. I've never flown before."

"Mayday acknowledged. We'll get you down. Don't worry."

"Can you line us up on Runway R30?" Jim asked Lugene.

"Yeah. I think so."

"Good. That's where we took off from, right? Now we'll land on the same runway heading into the wind. All traffic has been warned away, so don't worry. Watch your air speed as you approach. Try to land at between 65 and 70 knots. You won't have any problem. You've got all the time in the world. Just watch your speed. Just watch your speed."

Lugene brought the airplane around and lined it up with the runway. He saw emergency vehicles racing along the ground. He hoped his mother and sisters weren't worried. He brought the airplane down... down... down... Suddenly he gunned the engine, pulled the nose up.

"What happened? What happened?" Jim asked.

"I was gonna overshoot. I'm going around once more."

"You are cleared for landing, Tomahawk 2413-G," said the control tower. "That was a good decision. Come around once more. Take your time. That wasn't bad just now. You can do it."

Lugene banked the airplane around once more and vowed to disregard what was going on below. He watched the airspeed indicator as the ground rushed up to meet them. The ground was coming up fast... so fast! He pulled the airplane's nose up a little and let the flaps down. The airplane shuddered, lurched, and slammed onto the runway, leapt back into the air, dropped to the runway once more and bumped along with its tail swinging wildly.

"Pump your brakes. Pump your brakes," Jim advised.

Lugene complied and the airplane steadied a moment, veered off the runway onto the grass and tilted over onto one wing.

"Cut the engine and get out!" Jim shouted. "Get out! Get out!"

Sirens wailed as a fire truck and ambulance raced up to the damaged airplane. The engine was doused with foam as two firemen helped Lugene and Jim from the wreckage.

"I guess I didn't do so hot," Lugene said as he surveyed the damaged airplane.

Reporters pushed microphones before Lugene, television lights blinded him. What was going on?

"They heard your distress call on their CB radios and rushed over," one of the firemen explained. "You saved Jim's life. You're a hero."

Lugene's mother and sisters rushed up. Pauline hugged him tightly. His sisters had tears in their eyes. Suddenly, on cue, everyone sang:

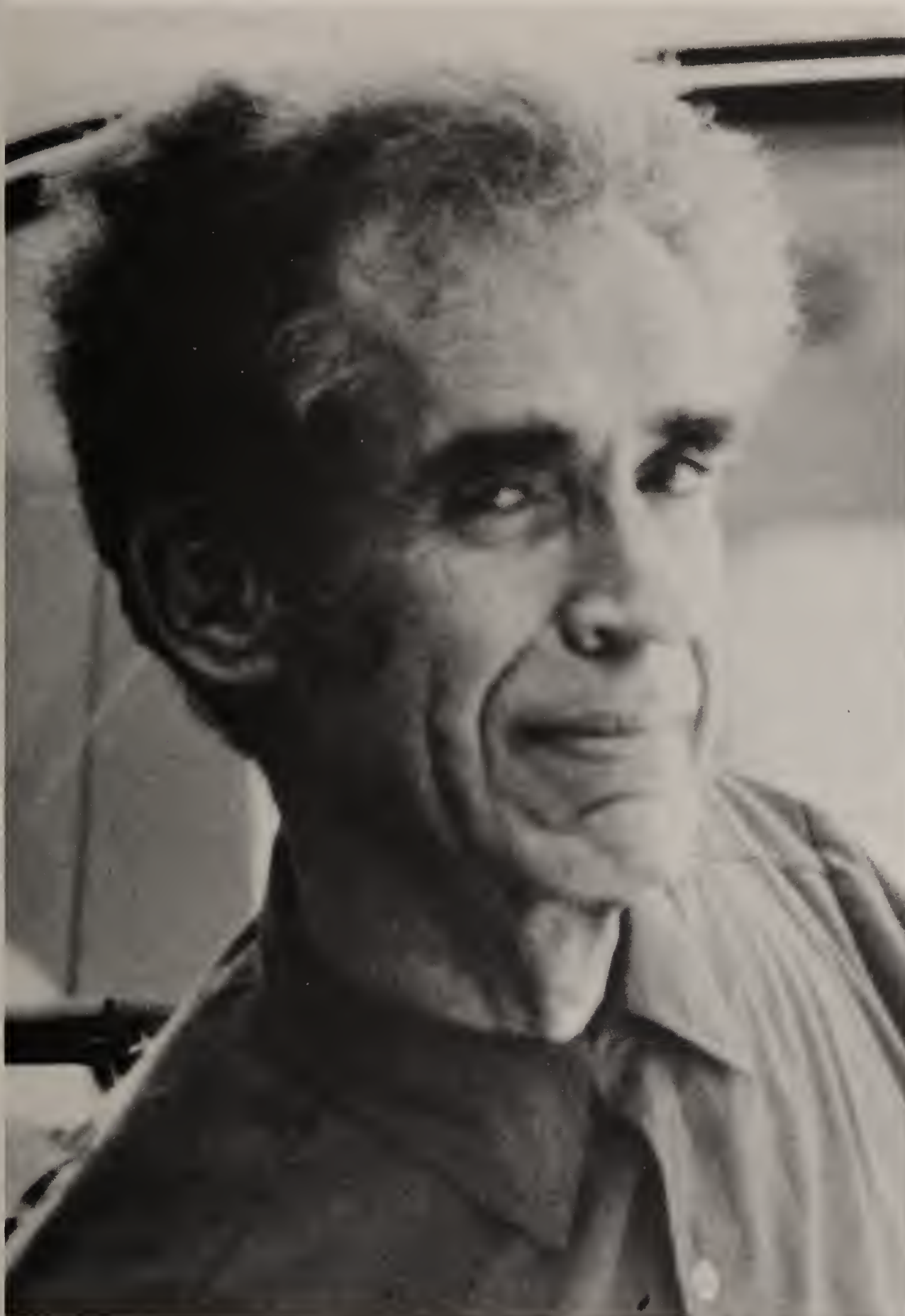
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LUGENE MORGAN!

Stafford A. Garbutt

Homage Due

Though I have always been
Enamored of the fall,
When earth wears Rembrandt colors
In a brilliant far-flung shawl,
I really must give springtime
Its earned homage due,
When things are dressed so lovely
In every pastel hue,
For pleasure floods the senses
After winter's ruthless reign
When on a treasured morning,
May gentians fringe the lane.

Virginia Borman Grimmer



Photograph by Tony Lamb

the seven

*we seek the sky,
we seek the sun,
we seek the realms
beyond the sun—
we do not pause
but thrust away
to purer light
than any star*

*we make the journey
all must make
the crossing
of galactic space,
to habitations
of the heart,
to vineyards
of the soaring soul*

*grieving binds us
to the earth,
but prayer
is like a wing for us*

*the hands of God
shall lift us up
from the shuttle
of mere finite time*

Charles Tinkham

Sorry Charlie! We had to do it! It was the unanimous decision of the Skylark Staff to include this special section of Professor Tinkham's poetry. Skylark has been his "baby" since its birth in 1972 and like a good father he has nurtured it and inspired his staff, making Skylark the publication it is today. Thank you, Charlie, for your enthusiasm and support!

The Skylark Staff



Drawing by Dale Fleming

a music in the grass

the dune
under the brightness
of birdcall and wind
shifts slowly inland,
covering grasses
and poplar and oak

in the short time
borrowed finitely
from eternity,
we watch them go,
two or three inches
of a year,
the breath of sand
around them,
the green of leaves
like a signal flag
gleaming in the sun

we are creatures
of these dunes —
a leaf,
a music
in the grass,
a moment
of this changing
mystic time

Charles B. Tinkham

for Eudora Welty

your eyes
unmitigated tenderness

petals after rain

the pure shone self
of the live oak

the wings of the mayfly
translucent with light
of summer's moon

a chameleon drowsing
gold-white
on the heartwood
of pine

the bright hand
of the sun
caressing the blossom
of pear

your eyes
unmitigated tenderness

Charles B. Tinkham

winterscape and star

the sharp, cold
fragrance
of the blue spruce

the fragile
green mystique
of the white pine

the dark mystery
of tamarack
lifting slowly
from the earth

the star-shone green
of red pine
curving
with the far, far
curve of sky

the winterscape
of snow
and long blue drifts
rising like sea-wave
at the shore
of old December dreams

and above,
the eternal star
of ongoing king
and invincible shepherd

Charles B. Tinkham



Drawing by Dale Fleming

you are

new violets
shy
in the grasses
of May

An April of rain
gleaming
on petals
of magnolia

twilight's lavender
deepening
on pools
of the evening

roses
climbing
a blue trellis
of sky

oak leaves
rustling
the gold winds
of autumn

nestlings
of robins
silvered
with feather

asters
night blue
in a garden
of sky

Charles B. Tinkham



Drawing by Dale Fleming

Fragments of Time

the tick
and rustle
of the wind
moving
through November's
corn

a baby's cry

a lichened
rock
crumbling
into sand

the morning
laughter
of wrens

the silver curve
that water makes
from winter
into spring

a bough
of grapes
glistening
in sun

the rusted hinge
of an old
screen door

an idea,
with a change
like light's,
becoming

Charles B. Tinkham

from the rose
of the world
you have come.

petal by petal
day by gleaming day

through seasons
of doubt,
seasons
of surety

through revolution,
through the slow
deliberate
turning of time
back upon
the rose beauty
of itself
you have come to be
and remarkably
are

Charles B. Tinkham

for Fernando Martinez

you live
beyond limits,
beyond boundaries,
beyond words
'yesterday,'
'today,'
'tomorrow'

like morning-glory
climbing
a silver string
of sky
you greet suns
that we have
never known,
you discover days
as infinite
as atom,
thoughts
beyond the pace
of merest galaxy

in your knowing,
you can reassure us:
love
can never be contained
but reaches
past the darkest fall
of night:
in your heart,
in your courage
you have told us this before
and now
you tell us once again

Charles B. Tinkham



Drawing by Dale Fleming

fall is a gold pool
of leaves
in which you and I
have waded
ankle-deep

winter is a grand
white ballroom
in which you and I
have danced
December's icy winds
away

spring
is a carousel
which you and I
have ridden
to the call
of waking birds

summer
is a lush green
garden of ideas
in which you and I
have walked
with intimate companions

Charles B. Tinkham

autumn gathers
its orange moons,
its circling blue skies,
the low startled flight
of the red-winged blackbird

grasses tick together
in long, long fields,
lone jack pines
pull their branches in
like a fox
curling to its sleep,
cold sifts down
through the mountainous
hay mow,
and the tiny skittering
of barn mice
stops

I dream now
in the grasses
as I walk —
and in silver-blue
explosion,
in a scattering
of old blossom and seed,
the pheasant
rises magnificent
before me

Charles B. Tinkham

autumn feels along
the cold of bone,
it gathers
to the orange
cathedral window
of the moon,
it follows
the lavenders
of curling chimney smoke
like bridal blossoms
lifted
through the sunset sky

children voices
are a rapt and chilly song
hymning maple leaves
and oak
to gold and russet dream,
the ground squirrel
slides deep
into God's pocket
of his fur,
and sumach
breaks
to heaven's fire
along earthen ways
of human doubt and hope

Charles B. Tinkham

afterwards

the hickory
soars
yellow gold,
the oak
blazes
fire red
in this time
of afterwards

in this time
of afterwards,
beneath these trees,
in the shadow
of the lean-to sky,
these men sleep
at last at rest,
in this time
of afterwards

in this time
of afterwards,
in this newer season,
there is honor here,
there is courage
distilled
for all weathers
of the soul,
there is memory
that drives us
with a will to love—
in this time of afterwards

Charles B. Tinkham



Drawing by Dale Fleming

the ox-eye daisy
sways
in early summer sun

in its clustering
of bright blossoms
amid blue-green grasses
it takes its summer place
unnoticed, unattended

the only sound
is the radiance
of its deft silence

it calls to us
it calls to us

Charles B. Tinkham

Blue Flag

(In LaPorte County, in
February of 1831, Mrs. Mary
Garroue, after visiting a sick
friend, died in a snowstorm on
her return home—Timothy
Ball.)

In the distance
A figure in the luminous blue
Gleams through
The snow.
Snow filling
Homeless, deep hollows
Of land:

The wind rises,
Then falls, with
Curious indifference, a
Dark wailing
That rides
White whirlwinds
Of time: the figure
In blue,
As frail as the violet
Is frail,
Is gone:

Beyond this wind,
Here on the prairie
In spring, long grasses
Will grow, blossoms
Will blow—blue flag
And jewelweed and phlox—
Here on this prairie
In spring.

Charles B. Tinkham

this white world,
this desert world,
this starred world

this world
of night's hollow wind
and day's unblossoming flower

beckons us,
beckons us
to dream
become real

in the corner
of the shed,
among these animals
below the broken
will of man,
a birth occurs

the cry of the child
amid this chill, amid
this trembling in the cold,
is beginning
of a warmth,
of a love,
of a hope
beyond mere galaxies
of dusty stars

Charles B. Tinkham

let love go forth
and let it not be shy

let it, like sun,
bring light
to depths
untold

let it say 'yes'
to chronicles of 'no'

let it, like a loving
seamstress of time,
give itself
to sewing
across the tearing
of the past

let all moments
be its day,
not one heartbeat
nor only one
gesture
of springtime's
fragile rose

let all seasons
be love's
richest time

Charles B. Tinkham



Drawing by Dale Fleming



Drawing by Dale Fleming

The Room of Night

Careless of the closing doors
 Of sky, each with a silver
 Handle of star, children make light
 Of the coming of dusk. In the wind
 Among the trees, in the delicate
 Skein of beginning crickets,
 In the vesper-service
 Of the singing sparrow,
 A voice from all sides
 Of nature's night room
 Says softly, Good Night.
 And the sun at last going out
 Is a candle carried forth
 In a hand that knows no ceasing.

Charles B. Tinkham

your hair
is light
as sun-tasseled corn

your smile is the glistening
of wind
through the high
summer poplar

your voice
is lissome
and quick
and filled
with rich maple light

your thoughts are a dreaming
of spring,
a full summer's
savoring,
a gold telling
of the tales
of the autumn

Charles B. Tinkham

your smile
is like
the bright swaying
of Queen Anne's lace
in a field
of unending summer

your smile
is like
the warmth
of still glowing
embers
in the wake
of the setting sun

your smile
is like
the blossoming
of magnolia
through the dreamlight
of lavender April

Charles B. Tinkham

you look beyond
November's wintry corner
to April's amber
blossoming

you look beyond
time's brimming eye
to the subtle pulse
of heart,
the quick rhythm
of its courage

you look beyond
the gray
of morning cloud
to the everlasting
brightness
of the sun

only life
can make you glad,
the steady
certain beauty
of its resurrection

Charles B. Tinkham

The brightness
of the marigold
waking
from its winter dark

the gleam
of snow
melting down
a hillside
of the spring

the soft glow
of fireflies
rising and falling
through a dusk
of summer grasses

the gold
leaf-light
of autumn's
sugar maple

so your smile
is a sunrise
and a growing light
all its brightest own

Charles B. Tinkham



Photograph by Matthew B. Aitken

What's Good for the Goose
A One Act Play

Characters:

Magnolia Haggarty
Buford Haggarty
Aunt Rosebud
Lawyer McDabney
Uncle Ju Ju
Mamie
Mosby
Peaches

Act I
Scene I

The Haggarty plantation in South Carolina, shortly after the Civil War. Magnolia and her brother Buford are sitting stone faced and erect in the parlor of the Haggarty mansion. Their recently freed slaves are seated behind them, crying. The two females are crying in earnest. The two males are only pretending to cry. Everyone is listening to Lawyer McDabney read the last will and testament of the late Colonel Beauregard Haggarty. The Colonel is lying in state a few feet away from the group. The Haggartys' freed slaves are barefoot and dressed in patched clothing. They are holding each other, rocking back and forth, and letting out exaggerated moans. The small gathering occasionally fan themselves to ward off the heat.

MAMIE: Oh, Lawd. De Colonel is dead. Jus' as dead as dead can be.

PEACHES: Bye-bye, Colonel. You is goin' to a better place.

JU JU: Don't know if it's better. I know it's hotter.

McDABNEY: Will the nigras please be quiet? How's a body s'pose to get anything done with all this commotion going on? Now where was I?

MAGNOLIA: The money, Lawyer McDabney. You was gettin' to the money.

McDABNEY: The money? Oh, yes. . . ar-r-gh. As you all know the Colonel died filthy rich. This was partly due to his shrewd mind and mostly to his. . . .

(The freed slaves yell "stinginess.")

McDABNEY: Doggone it! Can't you Haggartys control your people.

(Magnolia stands.)

MAGNOLIA: It's daddy's fault. He treated 'em like pets.

(Mamie stands.)

MAMIE: Well I druther be somebody's pet dan nobody's snake.

MAGNOLIA: Who you callin' a snake? I got half a mind to sell each and every one of you lazy nigras.

(Uncle Ju Ju raises his hand.)

MAGNOLIA: Yes, Uncle Ju Ju?

(Uncle Ju Ju stands.)

JU JU: A. . . Miz Magnolia.

MAGNOLIA: Yes?

JU JU: Begs yo' pardon, m'am. . . but yo' half a mind mus' have forgot—we is free.

(Mosby and Peaches stand. He has his arm around her shoulders.)

MOSBY: Das right. We jus' stayed on after de war cuz de Colonel promised to pay us.

BUFORD: We gave y'all free room and board. . . and all the food you could catch. What y'all need money for?

PEACHES: I wanted to buy me a fancy dress.

MAGNOLIA: You mean like mine?

MAMIE: She said a fancy dress, not a floosy's dress.

PEACHES: Dat man was so stingy, he up and died so he wouldn't have to give us nothin'.

McDABNEY: If'n you feel that way, why are you crying for him?

PEACHES: I ain't cryin' fo' him, I'm cryin' fo me and my dress.

(Uncle Ju Ju takes a folded paper from his back pocket and waves it.)

JU JU: Don't fret, child. You go get yo' dress. We signed a l-e-gal contract wit' de Colonel befo' he kicked de bucket.

McDABNEY: May I see that, Uncle Ju Ju?

(Uncle Ju Ju cautiously hands him the contract.)

BUFORD: Is it legal tender, Lawyer McDabney?

JU JU: As tender as a baby's behind.

McDABNEY: Um-m. Could be, Buford.

MAGNOLIA: Oh, Gawd. Those Black devils must have voodooed po' daddy.

MAMIE: You do only devil on dis plantation, Miz Mag-git-nolia.

JU JU: Shush! Fo' y'all raise de Colonel from de dead.

(The Haggartys and freed slaves cover their mouths briefly.)

McDABNEY: You're right, Uncle Ju Ju, it's signed. Which of you nigras is "X" number one?

(Mosby slowly raises his hand.)

BUFORD: Who taught you letterin', Mosby?

PEACHES: Ask de missy of de plantation. She likes to burn de midnight oil. Don't you, missy?

(Magnolia pretends not to hear Peaches.)

MAGNOLIA: A-h, Lawyer McDabney. I know how busy you are. Why don't we jus' sit down and let you finish readin' daddy's will?

McDABNEY: Does that meet with your approval, Buford?

BUFORD: Indeed, suh.

McDABNEY: Is that satisfactory with you nigras?

(The freed slaves huddle in conference. Afterwards they nod yes.)

McDABNEY: Then without further ado let's get on with it. The Colonel is gettin' ripe in the heat.

(The Haggartys and freed slaves hold their noses and sit down.)

McDABNEY: Now the Colonel's will is divided into two parts. The first part is supposed to be read today. The second part is supposed to be read one month from. . .

(Aunt Rosebud enters the parlor carrying a hot toddy on a tray.)

ROSEBUD: Yoo-hoo, Buford. Auntie's brought you a hot toddy.

BUFORD: I'm over heah, Aunt Rosebud.

McDABNEY: Doggone it! Now enough is a 'nough. . . find yourself a seat, Rose.

(Aunt Rosebud squints and walks to Mosby.)

ROSEBUD: Here's your toddy, sweetness.

(The freed female slaves begin to laugh.)

MAGNOLIA: My goodness, Auntie. That ain't Buford.

(Aunt Rosebud squints up at Mosby.)

ROSEBUD: Who is it, then?

MOSBY: It's me, Mosby, Aunt Rosebud.

ROSEBUD: So it is. I swear. . . you and Buford so much alike.

MAMIE: Huh, dey should be. Dey had de same da. . .

(Uncle Ju Ju nudges Mamie into silence. Aunt Rosebud walks to Buford and he takes the toddy. She sits next to Magnolia and the freed slaves hiss.)

ROSEBUD: Is there a snake in the parlor?)

(Magnolia turns to the freed slaves and sticks out her tongue.)

BUFORD: To your health, suh. (He toasts Lawyer McDabney.)

McDABNEY: If you people are really interested in my health, you'll settle down so I can read this heah document. . . else you'll be burying two this afternoon.

JU JU: You do looks right poorly, Lawyer McDabby.

McDABNEY: Ar-r-gh! It appears that the Colonel had a well developed sense of humor. . . and judging by those around him, I can understand why. "I, Colonel Beauregard Haggarty, being of sound mind and body. . . wish to all tarnation that I could leave my money to a more worthy lot. Y'all have been suckin' my blood since the day you was born. . . worse than any Carolina swamp mosquito."

MAGNOLIA: Oh, my. I jus' know daddy wasn't a talkin' 'bout me. I was his sugar.

McDABNEY: "Magnolia is livin' proof that the female species sucks blood better than the male species."

BUFORD: (Laughs) That's the God's truth. Me, I never gave daddy any trouble a t'all.

McDABNEY: "Buford, it's true, never gave me a lick of trouble. Course he weren't sober long enough durin' the day or night to give anybody anythin'. . . especially a helpin' hand 'round the plantation."

(The freed slaves begin laughing.)

McDABNEY: "As for Uncle Ju Ju, Mamie, Mosby, and Peaches (they stop laughing). . . un-be-knowin' to them I kept a daily tally of all the livestock on the plantation. And discovered that those slick nigras had been stealin' chickens and upon occasion a hefty hog. I deducted the cost of what they stole from what I owed 'em. . . and they'll be happy to know. . . I went to meet my maker without owin' them a red cent."

(The freed slaves begin crying and moaning.)

ROSEBUD: Lawyer McDabney, did my brother mention me in his will?

McDABNEY: I believe so. . . where is—here it tis'. "Tell my dingleberry of a sister that wearin' her bifocals ain't gonna make her any less desirable to the opposite sex. Course they won't make her any more desirable but at least she'll be able to tell a jackass when she sees one. She's married enough of 'em through the years to plough most of this heah state."

(Aunt Rosebud begins to bawl. She takes out a hanky and dabs her eyes.)

McDABNEY: Buford, the Colonel left provisions for all of you to share his estate equally, if you a mind to.

BUFORD: Not on your life. We ain't givin' these nigras what we earned.

JU JU: Earned? What's dat. . . a new kinda liquor you been drinkin'?

McDABNEY: There is a stipulation that would allow you, Haggartys, to have total control without sharing.

MAGNOLIA: O-o, sounds heavenly to me.

MAMIE: How de hell would you know 'bout heaven? You devil, you.

BUFORD: What's this heah stipulation?
 (The freed slaves lean closer to listen.)
 McDABNEY: The will states that if you, Magnolia, and Auntie Rose trade places with the freed slaves and work the plantation for thirty days. . .
 ROSEBUD: I'm too delicate for manual labor, suh.
 (The freed slaves hoot and howl.)
 McDABNEY: Then according to the will you'll be disinherited.
 ROSEBUD: Oh well. . . perhaps the country air will do me good. After all, I am a rose.
 MAMIE: Hmph! Mo' like a dogwood.
 McDABNEY: As I was saying, if you work the plantation for thirty days, you inherit the estate, Buford.
 MOSBY: If dey workin' de land, what we suppos' to do?
 McDABNEY: You nigras get to live like massas in the big house.
 (Mamie jumps up and claps her hands.)
 MAMIE: Lordy, look a here. I gets to be de missy at last.
 (Peaches gets up and points her finger at Mamie.)
 PEACHES: You gets to be de auntie, Mamie. I gets to be de missy.
 (Uncle Ju Ju tugs at Mamie's dress.)
 JU JU: Shush! Y'all beginnin' to act like dem Haggartys and you ain't even moved in yet.
 (Mamie and Peaches sit down and stare at each other briefly.)
 MAGNOLIA: Don't get too comfortable, nigras. It's only for a month.
 McDABNEY: That's right, Magnolia. . . unless you quit working before the month is out.
 BUFORD: And if we do?
 McDABNEY: The nigras get everything.
 (Magnolia swoons.)
 MAGNOLIA: I believe I'm gonna faint.
 (Aunt Rosebud begins to fan Magnolia. The freed slaves begin to talk among themselves.)
 BUFORD: Did you say that I think you jus' said?
 McDABNEY: About the nigras?
 BUFORD: Well we ain't got any Chinese!
 McDABNEY: (Sighs) If y'all stop working before the month is out, the nigras get the plantation.
 (The freed slaves begin to sing and dance.)
 MAGNOLIA: It ain't fair. It jus' ain't.
 JU JU: Begs yo' pardon, Miz Magnolia. But it's time we got what's comin' to us.
 (Buford walks over to Uncle Ju Ju with clenched fists.)
 BUFORD: I'd like to give you what you got comin'.
 (Mosby steps between Uncle Ju Ju and Buford.)
 MOSBY: Give it to me. He too old to appreciate it.
 McDABNEY: Y'all jus' simmer down, you heah?
 (Magnolia and Aunt Rosebud rush to Buford's side. The other freed slaves stand behind Mosby.)
 MAGNOLIA: Those nigras ain't got our home yet, bubba.
 ROSEBUD: We can last a month, sweetness.
 McDABNEY: Now y'all jus' step back. . . and cool off.
 (Everyone takes a step backward and a deep breath as well.)
 McDABNEY: There is one more thing. At the end of the month the plantation has got to show a profit. . . otherwise none a y'all get the property and it goes to the old soldiers' home.
 (Everyone grumbles.)
 JU JU: We made this plantation. . . worked like dogs. . . and we plan on keepin' it.
 BUFORD: Over our dead bodies.

MOSBY: Dat sounds good to me.
 JU JU: None of dat kinda talk. We go get dis place cuz we worked fo' it. Dey lived high on de hog fo' years cuz a us . . . now it's our turn. What's good fo' de goose is good fo' de gander.
 (Lawyer McDabney looks at his pocket watch.)
 McDABNEY: I've got to be going. . . see you folks in thirty days.
 BUFORD: Jus' have the deed wit' ya when ya come back, you heah?
 (Lawyer McDabney exits.)
 JU JU: After we get dis plantation, Buford, y'all can stay on fo' wages.
 BUFORD: We'll see who's go be workin' fo' who. Come on, Magnolia. . . Aunt Rosebud. We got work to do.
 (The Haggartys exit amidst the howls and jeers of the freed slaves.)
 PEACHES: Uncle Ju Ju, do you think dey go las' a month?
 JU JU: (Laughs) Not if we can help it, child. Not if we can help it. Now let's stop dis tomfoolery and get de Colonel planted somewhere.
 (Peaches and Mamie begin to giggle.)
 PEACHES: Sorry, suh. We too delicate fo' manual labor.
 (They run out of the parlor laughing. Mosby tries to follow.)
 JU JU: Mosby!
 MOSBY: (Stops) Yes-s, boss?
 JU JU: Bring yo' dim wits back heah. . . de Colonel is stinkin' up de place.
 (Uncle Ju Ju and Mosby attempt to carry out the casket. After a few mishaps and stumbles they succeed.)

Act I Scene II

One week later in the library of the Haggarty mansion. Peaches is sitting down, trying to read a book. She is still barefoot. Mamie is wearing a pair of Magnolia's shoes and wobbling around the room. She is in obvious pain. Each of them is wearing one of Magnolia's dresses.
 MAMIE: How can Magnolia get around in dees things?
 PEACHES: Yo' feets jus' too big—try Buford's brogans. Dey should fit you better.
 (Mamie wobbles over to Peaches.)
 MAMIE: What you doin'. . . lookin' at pictures, Peaches?
 PEACHES: Learnin' to read. I's go be de smartest person in de world.
 MAMIE: Das nice. If you can't be de prettiest. . . bein' smartest is next best.
 (Mamie peers over Peaches' shoulder and begins laughing.)
 PEACHES: Dem shoes mus' have shook you senseless.
 MAMIE: Child, you is readin' upside down.
 (Peaches, embarrassed, turns the book correctly.)
 PEACHES: I was jus' testin' you, Mamie.
 (Uncle Ju Ju enters the library.)
 JU JU: Mamie. . . is you losin' what little mind you got?
 MAMIE: Dat Peaches. She was readin' upside down.
 PEACHES: (Crying) Mamie keeps teasin' me, Uncle Ju Ju.
 JU JU: Don't pay her no mind. She got a dose of cat fever.
 MAMIE: De child is jus' plain stupid.
 JU JU: Well if you so smart—show her. And stop yo' cattin', woman.
 MAMIE: Hmph! I believes I will.
 (Mamie takes the book from Peaches and begins to read it backwards.)
 MAMIE: See, stu-p-i-d? Dis is how it's done.

(Uncle Ju Ju snatches the book from Mamie and sadly shakes his head.)

JU JU: Lawd, what I do to deserve dis punishment?

(Mosby enters the library.)

MOSBY: Uncle Ju Ju, our field hands wants to talk wit' you.

JU JU: Where's dey at, Mosby?

MOSBY: On de veranda. . . wants me to fetch 'em heah?

JU JU: What fo? Dey understand English. (Shouts) Say, y'all. C'mon in heah. . . makes sho' you wipes ya feets first.

(Buford, Magnolia, and Aunt Rosebud enter the library. They are barefoot. Buford is wearing a beat-up straw hat and faded overalls. Magnolia is wearing an old patched dress with a rope around her waist. She also has a red bandanna wrapped around her head. Aunt Rosebud is wearing a dress made from flour sacks.)

JU JU: Y'all never looked better. What can I do fo' ya?

BUFORD: We been workin' since sun up. . . and we want some afternoon leisure.

JU JU: Is dis leisure somethin' like restin'?

MAGNOLIA: We ain't animals—my feet hurt.

JU JU: Mosby, didn't you give 'em a cup of water and some corn bread?

MOSBY: I sho' did. I treats our people right.

(The freed slaves laugh.)

JU JU: Didn't y'all eat?

BUFORD: Yeah. But what about our leisure?

JU JU: You had yo' leisure when you was eatin'.

ROSEBUD: I can't work another hour.

MAMIE: You do looks tired, Auntie. Why don't y'all quit?

MAGNOLIA: And let you nigras inherit our plantation?

MAMIE: It ain't yours yet, missy.

(Aunt Rosebud squints at Peaches.)

ROSEBUD: Magnolia. . . is that your dress Peaches is wearing?

MAGNOLIA: Peaches! What have you done to my beautiful dress?

PEACHES: Jus' made it mo' beautiful by puttin' me in it. (Magnolia turns to Mamie.)

MAGNOLIA: Oh, my. You've ruined by favorite gown.

MAMIE: You don't need no gown to plough, Miz Magnolia. You is dressed jus' fine.

(Peaches and Mamie laugh while Magnolia sobs.)

MOSBY: If y'all through talkin', we best be gettin' back to de field.

(Uncle Ju Ju looks at a pocket watch which he has just taken from his pocket.)

JU JU: Reckon you right. You got eight mo' hours of light, Mosby.

BUFORD: Eight? The sun's go set by six.

JU JU: Dere's go be a full moon tonight.

BUFORD: Ain't that my pocket watch you're a lookin' at?

JU JU: Field bucks don't need to know de time. Right, Mosby?

MOSBY: Dat's what de Colonel used to say. (He clears his throat and impersonates the Colonel.) "Dere is jus' one time fo' you people. . . (The other freed slaves ask 'what time's dat, Colonel?') work time!" (The freed slaves begin to laugh.)

ROSEBUD: (Sighs) I'm jus' gonna wither away out there.

MAMIE: Dere is a plenty fertilizer in dem fields, Auntie. You ain't go wither, you go bloom.

MOSBY: Time's a wastin'. . . we got forty mo' acres to plough.

(Mosby leads the weary Haggartys outside.)

PEACHES: Miz Magnolia, take good care of my bandanna — you heah?

MAMIE: I jus' loves yo' dress, Aunt Rosebud.

(Peaches and Mamie begin to laugh. They hug one another, then pull back quickly.)

JU JU: Mosby! Bring Aunt Rosebud back heah.

MAMIE: Why you callin' fo her?

JU JU: She didn't look so good.

PEACHES: Aunt Rosebud ain't ever looked good.

JU JU: Shush!

(Aunt Rosebud returns with Mosby. She sits heavily in a chair and he leaves.)

JU JU: How you feelin', Auntie?

ROSEBUD: Better. And please don't call me auntie, uncle.

MAMIE: Why she sittin'?

JU JU: She tired. You'd do de same fo' a dog, wouldn't ya?

MAMIE: She ain't no dog. She de enemy.

JU JU: Yo' mouth is yo' enemy, Mamie.

ROSEBUD: I guess she has the right to feel that way, Uncle Ju Ju.

PEACHES: A. . . Aunt Rosebud?

ROSEBUD: Yes?

PEACHES: Could you teach me numbers?

ROSEBUD: I suppose so.

PEACHES: And readin', too?

ROSEBUD: (Sighs) Why not? It can't be any harder than picking cotton.

MAMIE: She lyin'. She a Haggarty. . . why should she help Peaches?

JU JU: Cus she don't want to burn up in dem fields, I reckon.

ROSEBUD: Do you know how to write, Peaches?

PEACHES: Yes, m'am. Mosby showed me.

ROSEBUD: Then I'd better show you that, too.

MAMIE: Uncle Ju Ju?

JU JU: Yeah?

MAMIE: If Aunt Rosebud go teach Peaches dem things . . . who go work in her place?

(Everyone looks at Mamie.)

MAMIE: Oh, no. Not me. I lives in de big house now.

JU JU: If dis plantation is short on help, it'll lose money. And if it does dat. . . you ain't go live no place.

MAMIE: Why me, Uncle Ju Ju?

(Uncle Ju Ju takes Mamie by the arm and leads her away from Peaches and Aunt Rosebud. He whispers into her ear.)

JU JU: De reason is cuz I need yo' kinda brains in de fields.

MAMIE: Fo' what?

JU JU: Spyin'.

MAMIE: Spying? Can't you get shot fo' dat?

JU JU: De war is over, Mamie. Look a here. . . someone gots to watch Buford and Magnolia. . . wit' yo' kinda thinkin'. . . you a natural fo' de job.

MAMIE: Well I is smarter dan Peaches.

JU JU: Dat's why I chose you. Now sneak off like a summer breeze and keep yo' eyes and ears open.

(Mamie nods and smiles. She tiptoes out of the library.)

PEACHES: Uncle Ju Ju, why is Mamie actin' so strange?

JU JU: She ain't actin', child. Dat's her nature.

(The three of them begin laughing.)

JU JU: Aunt Rosebud, I'm go catch me some leisure. Y'all can start crackin' dem books when you ready.

(Uncle Ju Ju exits. Aunt Rosebud and Peaches begin looking through a book. The lights fade on them and come up on Buford and Magnolia sitting down at a broken table,

eating.)
 MAGNOLIA: Collard greens and fat back—ugh!
 BUFORD: How did them nigras work on food like this?
 MAGNOLIA: That's why they stole chickens. I wish I could catch me one.
 BUFORD: Guess you won't be eatin' your fat back?
 (He reaches into Magnolia's plate and she stabs him with a fork.)
 BUFORD: Ow! Thought you didn't like fat back?
 MAGNOLIA: I don't. I don't like workin' either but I'm gettin' used to it.
 BUFORD: Look at us, Magnolia. . . fightin' over a piece of meat. We're actin' more like them nigras everyday.
 MAGNOLIA: It mus' be the food, bubba.
 BUFORD: I sorely miss eatin' in the big house.
 MAGNOLIA: Bubba, suppose the nigras get the plantation?
 BUFORD: Magnolia, we'd be up the creek without a paddle.
 MAGNOLIA: And I can't swim a lick.
 (Mosby calls to Buford and Magnolia. He is outside their quarters.)
 MOSBY: Sue-e, sue-e! Is y'all decent?
 BUFORD: We used to be. . . come on it.
 (Mosby enters.)
 MOSBY: How you folks feelin'?
 MAGNOLIA: Like nigras.
 (Mosby laughs.)
 MOSBY: Den y'all is tired but grateful to be alive.
 BUFORD: We'd offer you a chair 'cept we burned the rest to heat this heah shack.
 MOSBY: Nary mind. I'm used to standin'. . . jus' don't y'all get used to sittin'.
 MAGNOLIA: What brings you to our humble quarters, Massa Mosby?
 MOSBY: I was jus' wonderin' if y'all ready to quit?
 BUFORD: (Stands) Hard work ain't ever killed a Haggarty.
 MOSBY: Dat's cuz y'all did mo' watchin' dan doin'.
 MAGNOLIA: (Stands) We're jus fine, Massa Mosby. Thank you for your concern.
 MOSBY: Befo' I go. . . make sho' you is up early. . . 'bout five thirty.
 BUFORD: Hell, you can't work us all day and s'pect for us to get up that early.
 MOSBY: It ain't me. . . it's de mules. Dey get lonesome when you late ploughin'.
 (Mosby exits laughing.)
 BUFORD: If we live through this. . . those nigras gonna wish they was never born.
 MAGNOLIA: I know jus' how they go feel, bubba. I surely do.
 (The lights fade with Magnolia rubbing her rear.)

Act I Scene III

Two weeks later in the parlor of the Haggarty mansion. Mosby and Uncle Ju Ju are sitting and talking. Peaches is reading a book. Mamie is walking around the room in Magnolia's shoes pretending she is a well-bred lady. This time she does not wobble.
 MAMIE: Ain't I sim-p-ly e-l-e-gant?
 JU JU: You simple all right. Stop dat prancin' and listen up.
 (Mamie walks over to Uncle Ju Ju and Peaches stops reading to listen.)

JU JU: We losin' money.
 MOSBY: You sho', Uncle Ju Ju?
 JU JU: Yeah. We jus' ain't producin' like we used to.
 MAMIE: Dat's cuz we got dem lazy Haggartys workin' fo' us.
 JU JU: Don't matter who to blame. . . point is if we don't do somethin' ain't nobody go get dis place.
 (Peaches gets up and joins the group.)
 PEACHES: Uncle Ju Ju, if we have to leave dis place. . . where we go go?
 JU JU: Up North I guess.
 MAMIE: And what we s'pose to do fo' money?
 JU JU: (Sighs) I don't rightly know, Mamie.
 PEACHES: Den how we go eat?
 MOSBY: We ain't, looks like.
 (Aunt Rosebud enters the parlor carrying a hot toddy on a tray.)
 ROSEBUD: Yoo-hoo. Here's your hot toddy, Uncle Ju Ju.
 JU JU: No thank ya. I ain't in a drinkin' mood.
 PEACHES: (Crying) We is losin' money. We go lose de plantation.
 ROSEBUD: Oh, my. What are we gonna do?
 JU JU: I ain't gots no idea. But we go have to do somethin' quick.
 ROSEBUD: Uncle Ju Ju, why don't we all help each other?
 MAMIE: Dat's good fo' y'all but bad fo' us.
 JU JU: It's go be bad fo' everybody if we don't start makin' money.
 MAMIE: Aunt Rosebud got de right idea. But dad Buford won't go along. . . he pig-headed.
 JU JU: Let's take a vote. All dose in favor of workin' together. . . raise dey hand.
 (Everyone raises their hand except Mamie. Peaches whispers into Uncle Ju Ju's ear. He nods and smiles.)
 PEACHES: Po' Mamie's arm is broke, huh, Uncle Ju Ju.
 JU JU: Sho' looks like it from here.
 MAMIE: Ain't nothin' wrong wit' my arm—see?
 (Mamie raises her arm and Peaches and Uncle Ju Ju begin laughing.)
 MOSBY: I see we all agree. I'm go get Buford and Magnolia.
 (Mamie quickly lowers her arm. Mosby exits laughing.)
 MAMIE: Peaches tricked me. I ain't workin' wit' nobody.
 JU JU: I though you was smarter dan Peaches, Mamie?
 MAMIE: I is.
 JU JU: Den how could somebody you smarter dan trick you?
 MAMIE: A. . . a. . .
 JU JU: Course even smart folks is 'titled to change dere mind.
 MAMIE: Dat's right. I ain't stupid.
 JU JU: I jus' hope Buford and Magnolia's mind can be changed.
 ROSEBUD: It's possible. . . they aren't stupid, Uncle Ju Ju.
 JU JU: Dat's remains to be seen.
 (Mosby enters the parlor followed by Buford and Magnolia.)
 BUFORD: Y'all look like death. What's goin' on heah?
 ROSEBUD: We're in danger of losing the plantation, Buford.
 BUFORD: Not as long as we keep workin', we ain't.
 JU JU: We ain't makin' a profit. . . dat's de problem.
 MAGNOLIA: How can that be? We always did befo'.
 MAMIE: Dat's cuz y'all wasn't workin' dem fields befo'.
 BUFORD: You mean. . . we busted our backs for nothin'?
 MOSBY: Y'all nigras. . . get used to it.

MAGNOLIA: Well we got to do somethin'.
 ROSEBUD: We took a vote...and decided to work together.
 BUFORD: They ain't gonna help us, Auntie. They want the plantation for themselves.
 JU JU: Dat's de gospel truth, Buford. But if we don't work together ain't nobody go get dis place.
 MAGNOLIA: Uncle Ju Ju, if you help us...we inherit the estate.
 JU JU: (Sighs) I know...but I'd druther see y'all wit it dan dem dat-gum warmongers.
 BUFORD: They ain't a gonna get it, Uncle Ju Ju. This is our home and we gonna keep it.
 (Buford walks over to Uncle Ju Ju and offers his hand in friendship.)
 JU JU: Buford, dis is one handshake dat I purely goin' to enjoy.
 (Uncle Ju Ju and Buford shake hands and everyone begins hugging and kissing each other. Mamie and Peaches approach one another, hesitate, then embrace.)
 JU JU: Shush! Let's stop dis slobberin' and save dis place.
 ROSEBUD: May I walk with you, Mistuh Ju Ju?
 JU JU: Certainly, Miz Rose.
 (The lights fade with Uncle Ju Ju and Aunt Rosebud walking arm in arm. The rest of the group pair off and follow close behind.)

(The lights come up on the Haggartys and freed slaves sitting in the parlor with their possessions beside them. Lawyer McDabney is standing before the group with an envelope in his hand. The atmosphere is bleak.)

JU JU: Time sho' fly don't it, Lawyer McDabby? You sho' it's time?

MAGNOLIA: It jus' don't seem possible...thirty days have come and gone.

McDABNEY: I told you I'd be back in a month, and it's been jus' that.

(The group moans.)

McDABNEY: By the looks of things...the plantation is in the red.

JU JU: Is dat good or bad?

McDABNEY: If you're an old soldier, Uncle Ju Ju, it's good.

(The group moans.)

BUFORD: It ain't our fault—cotton don't fetch the price it used to.

ROSEBUD: Lawyer McDabney, we've worked together like a family this past week.

MAGNOLIA: We jus' spent too much time on selfishness.

MOSBY: Mo' like foolishness.

McDABNEY: It appears that y'all have learned to live with one another.

MAMIE: Good thing, too, cuz now all we got is each other.

PEACHES: Dat's somethin' at least.

McDABNEY: As I mentioned earlier, the Colonel's will is divided into two parts. I read y'all the first part thirty days ago. The second part is in this heah envelope. (He tears open the envelope and begins reading.) "There is little doubt in my mind that by the time this second part of my will is read, the plantation will be in shambles. This is partly due to the drop in the price of cotton...but mostly to the lack of cooperation between my children and freed slaves. If somehow they have learned a lesson from their selfishness, however, they will have profited more than I ever did."

JU JU: What is de Colonel sayin', Lawyer McDabby?

McDABNEY: The Colonel believes that if y'all have learned a lesson trying to outdo one another, that you've made a profit.

(The Haggartys and freed slaves nod yes and vocally express the same.)

McDABNEY: That being the case...the old soldiers will have to find somewhere else to roost.

(Everyone shouts. They get up and begin dancing.)

MAGNOLIA: Who does the plantation belong to, Lawyer McDabney?

(Lawyer McDabney studies the will carefully.)

McDABNEY: Magnolia, it's made out to all of you.

ROSEBUD: Mistuh Ju Ju, you and Buford are the head of this heah family. What do you think we should do with our new wealth?

JU JU: Well, Miz Rose, Buford and I been thinking' 'bout investin' in some property.

BUFORD: That's right, Auntie. (He puts his arm around Uncle Ju Ju's shoulders.) In fact, we already got some choice acreage picked out.

ROSEBUD: That's wonderful. I'm so glad we've learned to live together.

JU JU: We all de Lawd's chillun, Miz Rose.

MAMIE: Or de Colonel's.

(Everyone laughs.)

JU JU: Buford and I do have a small problem, dough.

ROSEBUD: And what's that?

JU JU: How to get all dem dat-gum Injuns off dat land.

Gentry L. Smith

Rural Balm

I'll build my house on sunny banks,
 Where sycamore and shadbush grow;
 And willow trees in double ranks
 Rise up where limpid waters flow;
 A lodge where interlacing trees
 Will give me shade in summer warm,
 And stay the rigor of the breeze
 That chills the land in winter storm,
 A house to prompt the poet's dream,
 With paintings rare, and books in store;
 A rustic bridge across a stream
 To lead the stranger to my door,
 A place where friends of mine may stay,
 And linger long before we part,
 Friends wise enough to find a way
 To read the secrets of my heart;
 And when some kind celestial star
 Shall beckon me to worlds more fair,
 I'll leave my cottage doors ajar
 So other folks may shelter there.

John C. Bolin



Photograph by Karen Luksich

Change

There is dew on the grass,
The kitchen faucet drips,
Coffee gurgles in the percolator.
The man sings in the shower,
The housewife waters ferns and philodendrons.
Small ripples with designs upon the sand
Tat edgings on the shore.
High on the mountain a waterfall splashes.

Rain stripes the windowpanes,
The faucet drips,
The coffee boils,
Stains pattern the ceiling,
As gutters overflow;
And water from the mountain floods the valley,
While angry waves crash on the shore
And dig deep furrows in the sand.

In the morning there is dew on the grass,
The faucet drips, the coffee gurgles,
But the shower is silent.
Subdued waves caress the wounded sand,
High on the mountain the waterfall splashes;
And in the kitchen
Tears drop, one by one,
Upon the table.

June Shipley

Distant Music

There will be lovers
who will find this place,
hill high above the sea,
with heightened pace
and hope grown bold
enough to dream, and reach
beyond the farthest wave
upon the farthest beach.

They will not know
that we were here today,
and heard the far off call
of distant music play.

They will not know
we stayed and learned
that music echoed our own song;
and beauty climbed and spread
and settled in a valley bed.

Yet they may learn love speaks
in subtle ways, in sounds the ear
will not be quick enough to hear;
in quiet steps, and reaching hands;
in thoughts as many as the sands.

Dorothy Stuart Swenson



Morgan Falls by Al Janssen

Ice

*Clear as ice newly born,
Grown from the knowledge
Of action truly worn,
My body falls forlorn
To become Earth's acorn.*

*And the mist on winter's water
Toward the past thickens
As my heart hardens
From the surface inward.*

*Yet on the shoreline of my mind
Loves and laughs
Still echo inside matter,
And bubbles rise
To the surface of the ice.*

Anne Guilbeau Stearns



Photograph by Karen Luksich

A few words for my mother

On the pavement
of my trampled soul
the steps of madmen
weave their prints
of crude, disarrayed words.
Hollow silence reverberates
in empty echo chambers.
The wind throws
casual baited lines
into regions
of malignant roofs. . . .
Midnight with its sodden hands
has fingered me,
the lame icon-painter
because I saw Christ escape
and turn into an icono-clast.
Kicking pebbles around,
thrusting the dagger
of desperate words
into the swollen pulp of the sky,
the evening now turns its back
on the windows,
the hovering dark space
turns its pockets
inside out,
the stroke of midnight falls
like a severed head
from the guillotine. . .

Vladimir Mayakovsky
translated by Maria Bernstein

Ritual

Sun shining through
The bright orange crowns
Of black-trunked trees
Casts tiny spotlights down
Upon dry dancing leaves
Grasshopping on the ground.

The crisping wind,
A busy shepherd, tries,
To herd the runaways
Into a heap,
That errant feet
Might keep a rendezvous
To scatter;
Rustling crackling shuffling through
The gaily-colored souvenirs
That lie
Beneath
October's celebrating sky.

June Shipley

John Erpenbeck was born in 1942 in Russia, moved to the German Democratic Republic in 1945. He has a doctorate in physics and is now working in the field of philosophical problems of scientific development. He now lives in Berlin. He has published several novels and two volumes of poetry.

The Wind

A long journey he had,
This free wind.
He changed the trees to roaring organpipes,
And then again, he sang soft silvery songs
As hushed as minuets.

But he was captured suddenly
And put to use inside a vacuum sweeper,
Where he now howls and howls monotonously,
His voice roughed up by dust and so much deeper.
For all the tenderness has fled
From his Procrustes' bed.

Though sometimes, at night, I let him go free.
He shyly floats around the room,
Singing a little, but coughing too.
He is too tired to complain.
And if some free, happy wind blows by,
He hides himself in the curtainfolds,
My poor, imprisoned, subservient wind.

John Erpenbeck

Der Wind

Er kam von einer langen Reise.
Ein freier Wind, der in den Baumen sang.
Das drohte wie ein Orgelklang. —
Dann sang er eine Sauselweise,
die war so silberzart und leise
wie ein Monett. . .

Doch plötzlich hat man ihn eingefangen.
Hat ihn im Staubsauger eingebaut.
Nun heult er sehr monoton und laut.
Der Staub hat ihm seine Stimme verraut,
und die Zärtlichkeit ist ihm vergangen
in seinem Prokrustesbett.

Nur manchmal, abends, da laß ich ihn frei.
Dann schwebt er mude im Zimmer umher.
Er singt ein wenig und hustelt dabei.
Beschwert sich meistens nicht einmal mehr. —
Und fliegt ein freier, glücklicher Wind vorbei,
verkriecht er sich unterm Fensterbrett.

Armer, gefangener, nützlicher Wind.

Understanding

*Dressed in black,
a frustrated tear fell down my cheek.*

*I have to be the strong one now—
Mother can't take the strain
and little brother's too young
to understand,
that part of his life was just buried
under this green patch of land.*

*To repair the rainbow
our family used to walk
will take so long—
with all those memories still etched
so clearly in our minds.*

*Why is it so complicated?
Why can't we understand?
I feel the ground will give way
beneath our feet
if we try to stand.
What we're grasping for now—an understanding
will someday come.
Sorrow and despair are keeping us apart,
to open up and talk about it—
that's something of a start.*

Lisa Layer

*Dancing in an emerald-green meadow
Silk skirts fluttering in the breeze
Raising graceful arms to the forever sea-sky
Dandelion—,
Violet—,
Buttercup&fairies
Laughing blonde daisies bend frail green bodies
Entwining crabgrass partners in an elegant waltz
Nature's ballroom
Until the snowlace curtains fall*

Melanie Denise Hanson

*The sky blackens
Trees toss their heads
Heavy with summer finery
Rushing through the bowing trees
Wind
Escaping the torrents of rain
Rain that lashes out with gnarled tree branches
Against the roar of thunder
The mighty, groaning relief
Of releasing heavy raindrops
A streak of bright white light
Rips through the velvet darkness
Tearing nature open at the seams*

Melanie Denise Hanson

A Deadly Sport

*In the hot sun,
while salty sweat
rivulets to your eyes;
you know what it is like
to face death.*

*"Ole! Ole!
Toro! Toro!"*

*Black and powerful,
from across the arena charging.
Death. Cruel death.
Is this the way you come?
Is this the way I go?*

*A pirouette.
A flash of the cape.
And the thundering hooves go by.
"Oh God. Give me strength.
Virgin Mary, spare me."*

*A shaking of the earth.
You tense and wait.
A veronica.
"Ole!"
And death has passed you by
once more.*

*But, catlike swift,
head lowered, comes charging
the black and powerful adversary.
Sideways and back you lean,
cape flaring to your right.
"Ole! Ole!"*

*And then . . . the mortal sin.
You pause a moment too long.
You pirouette a moment too slow.
"Umpff!"*

*The horn goes in deep. . .
in deep somewhere within you.
Up to the sun.
Down to the earth.
Death. Cruel death.
So this is the way you come.
So this is the way I go.*

Stanford A. Garbutt

Silver Spill

*A sliver of silver
split the dawn,
and spread through the sky
until dark was gone.*

*I have known love
to quicken and fill
a colorless life
with a silver spill.*

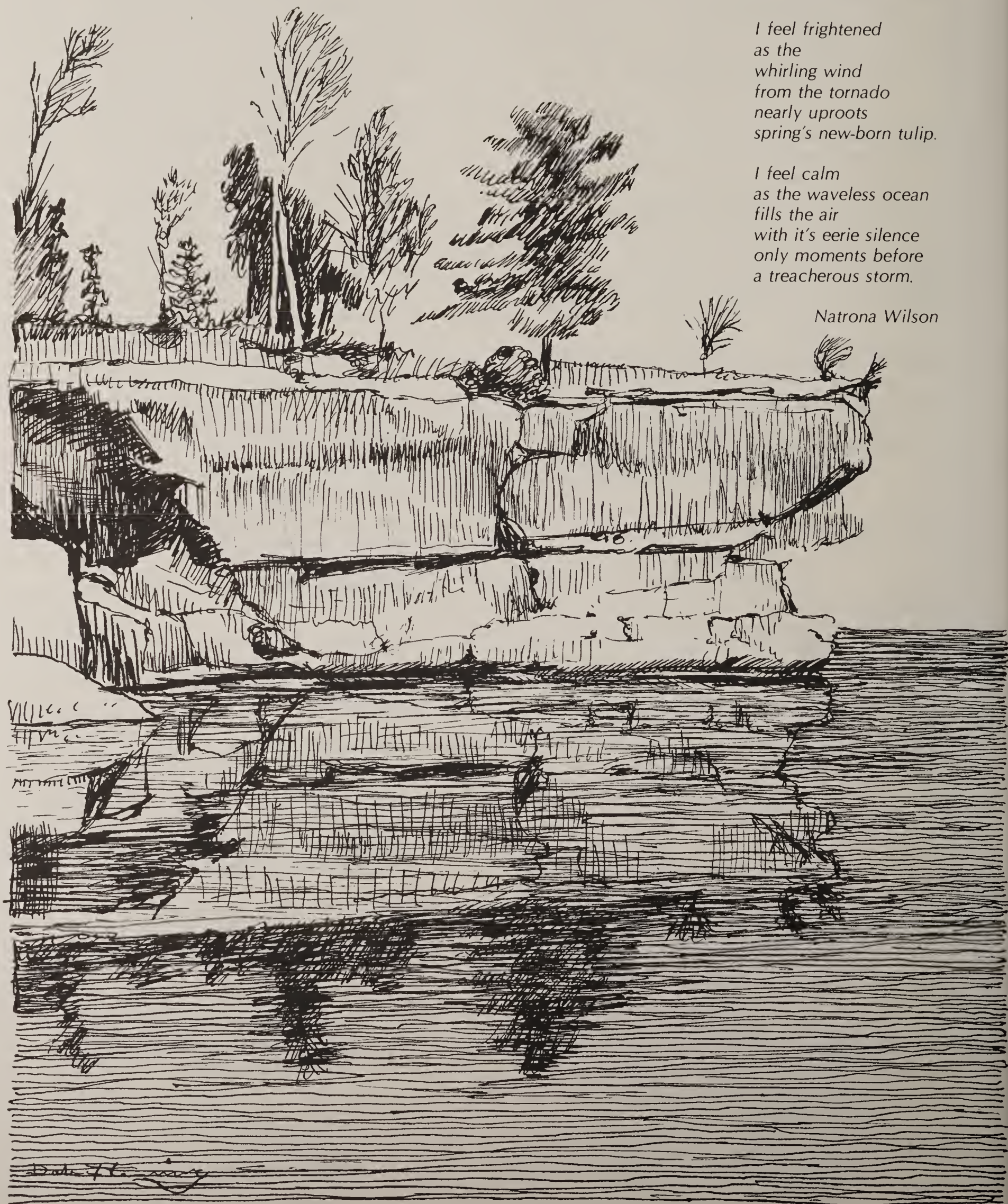
Dorothy Stuart Swenson

I feel confused
as the rain
that changes
into sleet,
then into snow
and back to rain.

I feel frightened
as the
whirling wind
from the tornado
nearly uproots
spring's new-born tulip.

I feel calm
as the waveless ocean
fills the air
with it's eerie silence
only moments before
a treacherous storm.

Natrona Wilson



Drawing by Dale Fleming

Call Me Lucky

Once upon a time I chance to purchase a rather disastrous looking automobile which had limped off the assembly line some 15 to 18 years ago. Low priced, not beautiful, but good enough to drive to work and back.

The ignition key was the only one that came with the car and the glove compartment and the trunk were locked.

I was curious about the glove compartment. What could be in it? A horse-choking roll of hundred dollar bills? A bottle of whiskey? An old western six-shooter? Reluctant to break the lock, I drove to a locksmith and he opened it for me. — It was empty.

A few days later I wondered if there was a spare tire in the trunk in case I had a flat. Would it really contain a spare? Or a body, perhaps? Or a fishing rod or a peck of potatoes? I drove to the locksmith and he opened it for me. — It was empty.

Several days passed and I was putting some junk of my own in the trunk. Under the decrepit floor mat, in the well where the spare tire should have been, I discovered a small wooden box. Was it full of jewelry? A hidden treasure map maybe or a bottle of Carter's Little Liver Pills? — It was empty.

One day I dragged the back seat out of the car in search of a rattling noise. Folded into one corner was an old, mildewed, moth-eaten lady's purse. Full of silver dollars or ten-dollar gold pieces, you ask? — It was empty.

A fortnight or so later, I went to the garage in the early morning darkness to get my car and go to work. I raised the garage door and peered inside. — — — — —
— — — — — It was empty.

Jim Thorley

Ford
1925



The Schlemke Factor

This evening, 28th July 1986, Arno Schlemke was born in the maternity hospital of the Berlin-Niederschonhausen district. The newspapers reported it early the following morning. The evening before his birth the event was forecast by TV in the current-affairs program. At the weekend anyone interested could read a long article on Arno Schlemke who, as publicity announced now, would discover in the year 2035 something called the Schlemke Factor that would affect science and humanity equally.

Anyone who got to hear about Schlemke and took pains to look him up in Meyer's New Encyclopedia found Schlemke listed there. The entry contained some particulars of his future life that would culminate in the discovery of the Schlemke Factor at the beginning of May 2035. What the Schlemke Factor consisted of no one was able to say. It had something to do with the field of chemistry and the body balance. But everyone knew that this factor was decisive for human life. And most people were prepared for it.

When Schlemke went to the nursery school at the age of three, he was trained in mechanical toys. Of course he was as boisterous and cheerful as the other children but, unlike them, he did not have to be asked to be always the first. He was that. And when the class went to the Citizens' Park to watch tame deers, a specially qualified nursery teacher and her constant companion led little Schlemke to the chemico-physical laboratory of the university.

At the primary school it was no different. Everyone knew what was expected of Schlemke. Even Schlemke heard about himself and understood who he was and what he had to do. Not that he was proud of it. That was something for the headmistress.

Schlemke remained an almost normal child and later an above-average scientifically revolutionized young man entitled to a helicopter and a girlfriend in the Rontgental district of Berlin.

Schlemke lived conscious of his goal. And whenever he felt unsure of himself, he read about himself in the New German Biography and recovered his sense of purpose. By the age of twenty he had a double doctorate and was made to join the institute where the Science Center was already waiting for him to discover in 2035 the factor that bore his name.

Schlemke was always used to doing only what was important in life. Each time he was told what was important. Soon he married an academically trained computer operator who looked imposing at the annual meetings of the Chamber of Technology. She needed him only rarely.

It was on a Tuesday in 2030 that the Party Secretary came up to Schlemke in the laboratory and asked him in a friendly way to bring forward the discovery of the Schlemke Factor by a couple of years for a pressing reason, namely the anniversary of the establishment of gravity. Gladly agreeing, Schlemke tried in vain. The Schlemke Factor had, as the papers said, "not yet matured."

At last in May of 2035, as foreseen, the time was ripe for the sensational breakthrough. The famous man no longer left his laboratory. Even the members of his team worked overtime. The world was holding its breath in suspense. On the evening of 31st May Schlemke knew that he had not yet discovered the Factor. June too went by unsuccessfully. By November Schlemke knew, and the world knew, that the Schlemke Factor was not going to be discovered. As a result, a new biography of Schlemke was printed. Then his name reappeared in the telephone directory. After he had returned

all his medals and titles to the authorities that withdrew all the funds that had been placed at his disposal, he became a laboratory technician. He devoted his life, as he had always done, to science; he did not miss anything so long as he stayed in the laboratory.

Never in his life had he observed a snail. Or sawed a branch off a tree. He had never gone with a closed umbrella into the drizzle. Never had he stared for half an hour at one of Rembrandt's paintings, wanted to paint a sunset to preserve it, moved his toes in time to the music at a concert. Never had his heart missed a beat at the sight of an unattainable woman. None had expected any of that from him. There was no mention of it in his curriculum vitae. And as he did not have a thousand peripheral things in him, he lacked the spark of intuition. For this reason he discovered nothing. And that is the Schlemke Factor.

Heinz Knobloch

From Breakfast of Champions

I will come to a time in my backwards trip when November eleventh, accidentally my birthday, was a sacred day called Armistice Day. When I was a boy, and when Dwayne Hoover was a boy, all the people of all the nations which had fought in the First World War were silent during the eleventh minute of the eleventh hour of Armistice Day, which was the eleventh day of the eleventh month.

It was during that minute in nineteen hundred and eighteen, that millions upon millions of human beings stopped butchering one another. I have talked to old men who were on battlefields during that minute. They have told me in one way or another that the sudden silence was the Voice of God. So we still have among us some men who can remember what God spoke clearly to mankind.

Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

From A Fist Full of Fignewtons

Warren G. Harding was widely known, during the dark ages when I was attending it, for being an "advanced" school, and actual tests were very rare. This worked in beautifully with our survival techniques and made it possible for me and my band of fellow ignoramuses to slide by year after year undetected. Although, of course, we didn't know it at the time, we were part of the pioneering advance wave of generation upon generation of total illiterates that have been spawned by "progressive" education.

At home, grade by grade, my reputation slowly grew until I was considered a truly superior intellect. This is one of the great American myths. It has persisted for ages—the unfailing belief that every generation is brighter, taller, more beautiful, than the one before it—in spite of obvious evidence to the contrary. Naturally, I did everything I could to encourage my old man in this belief. I must admit that I, too, firmly believed it. Every generation does, until, inevitably, the walls come tumbling down.

Jean Shepherd



Photograph by Karen Luksich

A Woman Misplaced

The first time I saw Hanna was the day she entered my second-grade classroom. She was quite a spectacle, with her "lederhosen" and her Bavarian hat with its boldly jutting feather. She wore sandals and colorful knee-high socks. I had never seen sandals before. In our small town, we wore shoes or went barefoot; there was no in-between. To complete the attire, a marvelous, hand-crocheted sweater draped her shoulders. She entered the room reluctantly, exposing herself to our curious scrutiny, her hand firmly entrenched in the hand of her mother.

Nowhere, ever, had any of us pre-television-era children seen the likes of Hanna's mother! Her mother—in a silky, clinging black dress, wearing a wonderfully large-brimmed black hat, black gloves, and high, black heels. All our mouths were opened in awe. She was a combination of Susan Hayward and Rita Hayworth, with soft chestnut waves escaping from a securely pinned mass of uplifted hair. Large violet eyes purposefully studied the room, traveling over our attentive faces, over Hanna, and finally resting upon Miss Ostermeyer, our teacher, who was approaching in her rapid, swishing swaddle.

As Miss Ostermeyer nosily welcomed them, I stared at Hanna, envying her, her mother. So this was Mrs. Brady—the beautiful wife that Willie Brady had brought home from Germany! No wonder my father had chuckled when he told my mother about "Willie's catch." Don't know how he did it," he told her, "but Willie's got himself a lady." I had paid little attention at the time, but now I strained my memory, trying to grasp the conversations they had about this elegant stranger and her daughter. My eyes, pressed in this concentration, fixed upon Mrs. Brady, as my mind brought forth remnants of my parents' previous discussions. There was something about a "widow" and a father being killed in the war. Hanna's father, like she and her mother, was German, and had fought against us in the war.

"Richie, show Hanna her desk and where to hang her sweater." Miss Ostermeyer asked me in her loud, commanding voice, bring me out of my reverie. I felt my face crimson as I awkwardly rose from my desk and smiled at Hanna. I did not have the courage to look at her mother, but I knew that I was the envy of every boy in class for being brought to her attention by Miss Ostermeyer's request.

Hanna showed no intention of leaving her mother's side as I slowly approached her. Her discomfort—acute and desperate—added to my own, but I smiled despite this and timidly offered my hand. Hanna lifted her eyes to meet mine, and I felt a plunging somewhere in my stomach as those green eyes misted with silent tears. I imagined myself Robin Hood, here to save a fair maiden as her mother, a beautiful, anguished queen, looked on, deeply grateful for my selfless courage.

"Well, Richie, are you going to stand there all day, or are you going to do as I asked?" Miss Ostermeyer chided, aware of my total mesmerization. Again I felt my cheeks burning crimson, but I managed to lead Hanna to her desk, which was directly in front of mine. Being unable to think of one thing to say in my embarrassment, I pointed to the desk that would be hers, and quickly sat down, forgetting about her sweater. Hanna followed suit, and Miss Ostermeyer turned her attention to Mrs. Brady. They walked slowly to the door, while twenty-three pair of eyes followed them until they disappeared into the hallway, closing the door behind them.

Hanna's eyes anxiously turned to the door, and there they remained as we all directed our attention to her. She was

pretty enough, with those large, misted green eyes and high cheek bones that hallowed her square face. Her lips puckered and trembled over a firm chin that was indented with a large cleft. But there was no trace of red in her brown hair, which was cropped into a pageboy. She remained facing the door, intent upon not crying, looking forlorn and strange in her German attire, her hat with its feather. We continued to awkwardly stare at her in silence, for we dared not make any noise that could incur Miss Ostermeyer's scorn. Many a palm had been stung by her ruler. Soon the voices in the hall quieted, and Miss Ostermeyer's pudgy frame entered the room. "You children behaved very well," she noted.

Miss Ostermeyer had a habit of sending a student on some fabricated "important" errand when she wanted him or her out of the room so that she could discuss some personal, pertinent information about them with the class. This usually occurred when someone's parent or grandparent was very ill, and Miss Ostermeyer would ask for our understanding treatment of our unfortunate classmate. So we were not surprised when she sent Hanna with Arnie Taylor to fetch some chalk from old Henry, our janitor.

"Hanna and her mother just arrived from Germany one week ago," she informed us. Most of us already knew this much. "She does not speak English well, so we will have to be patient with her and help her. I don't want to hear anyone making fun of her for this. I'm sure, with our help, she will be speaking as well as we do in no time."

"We all nodded in agreement. So, she doesn't speak English! I hadn't thought of that! Maybe she wasn't so shy. I tried to imagine myself not able to talk our language, and thought of my little brother, Timmy—one year old with a vocabulary of a few words and a right forefinger that pointed well."

The afternoon passed quickly and the school bell, announcing the end of our day, brought us gleefully to our feet. I rushed to pull my jacket off its hook, stopping in mid-stride as Mrs. Brady entered the room in her same black attire. Only this time, her chestnut hair flowed freely to her shoulders, and her violet eyes sparkled as they rested on Hanna. Even at my young age, I could not fathom how Willie Brady could have captured such a lovely, charming lady. Everyone in our small town knew Willie as a hard-working, hard-drinking brawler. He lacked both charm and finesse. How, I wondered, had this happened?

Hanna and her mother quickly disappeared out the door, and I began my walk home. I lived seven blocks from school, so this usually took twenty minutes, give or take a distraction or two. Sometimes I would take the route along our lake, which was four blocks out of the way, but well worth it, for the beauty and the time for contemplation that was gained. I took this route that afternoon, my thoughts swimming in the day's events. I decided, finally, to take a detour past Hanna's house, hoping to catch a glimpse of Mrs. Brady. My effort was rewarded! As I passed, she stepped onto the porch to shake the dust out of some rugs. Though she was no longer dressed in her black finery, she looked quite nice in a long skirt and loose blouse. Her hair was gathered beneath a scarf. She smiled at me and I quickened my pace as I smiled in return. While she pounded the rugs against the porch's iron rail, I hurried into a run, happy at having gained her attention once again. My spirits remained lifted as I reached our grey-bricked house. Mom was preparing dinner and Timmy was muttering some nonsense from his high chair when I bounced in. "Rishie! Rishie!" he screamed as I lifted him from his chair and into the air. "Not so rough, young man!" Mom warned as she

usually did during our ritual. "So, how was school?" she inquired.

"Hanna Brady came to school today." Trying not to sound too eager, I added: "Her mother brought her and picked her up. Mrs. Brady is beautiful, Mom."

"So I hear," Mom answered, smiling.

And then I blurted—"do you think you could make friends with her, mom? She doesn't seem to know anyone. Mrs. Ostermeyer told us to help make Hanna comfortable. Maybe you could be there after school tomorrow, and we could walk with them."

"This little Hanna must have made quite an impression on you," Mom observed. If only she knew my ulterior motives! I tolerated her teasing, for I had tasted the attentions of this beautiful stranger twice in one day and was almost beside myself. If befriending Hanna meant that I would be near her mother once in a while, then befriend her I would! Besides, Hanna didn't seem like she was too bad. She'd probably do all right as a friend.

"Well, I guess that would be no problem, providing Timmy here, wakes up from his nap on time," she agreed.

And so I spent the rest of the day and evening anticipating the next day. "My mother would like for you and Hanna to walk with us," I would tell Mrs. Brady, beckoning her to join us. And her violet eyes would rest on mine and smile in agreement. Full of anticipation, I fell easily asleep later that night.

Hanna was already in class when I arrived the next morning. I took my seat quickly behind her, disappointed at having missed her mother. "Hi" I said as she turned back to me and smiled. Her eyes were clear and bright this morning, with no signs of misting. Once again she was dressed in lederhosen, sandals and her Bavarian hat. Miss Ostermeyer walked into the room, noticing Hanna's hat immediately. "Let's take that off while in school, Hanna. You can wear it when we go outside." Hanna seemed to understand, for she reluctantly removed her hat and hooked it over her sweater. "Well, let's see—who would like to read the first paragraph?" Miss Ostermeyer asked, beginning our school day.

When it was time for recess, I asked Hanna to join me and Billy Blanco, my best friend. Billy griped a little, but didn't seem to mind too much after I offered him my best red purie. That was the first time I remember bribing someone. We taught Hanna how to play marbles and she was really enjoying herself until Miss Ostermeyer scolded us for teaching her such a "dirty" game, and looked scornfully at Hanna's dirt-smudged knees. "Go inside and wash those knees young lady!" she ordered. Again, Hanna seemed to understand. She soon returned to her desk, still smiling from her fun at recess. I was feeling quite proud of myself.

The school day passed quickly, and as Hanna's mother made her appearance, I anxiously ran out of the classroom and searched the school yard for my mother. I sighed audibly when she and my brother came around the corner. "Well, here we are Richie. Where's your new friend?" she asked me, just as Hanna and her mother came outside, hand in hand. As usual, Hanna's mother was dressed as no woman in our little town dressed. She appeared to be ready to go to the opera or to a fancy restaurant, neither of which we had in our town, not ready to pick up a child from school. Wanting to be noticed by this wonderful woman, I gathered my nerve and ran up to her. "My name is Richie." I stammered. She looked at me expectantly and I felt my tongue stick stubbornly to the roof of my mouth, leaving me foolishly silent. Thank goodness Mom took over, introducing

herself and Timmy and inviting them to join us as we walked. Hanna and I trailed behind as our mothers talked. Hanna's mother spoke English fluently with a delightful German accent. She seemed to enjoy talking, having no trace of Hanna's shyness, and being very open about her life overseas. I listened to her as we walked. She told of working as an interpreter for the American embassy before marrying Willie. Her father owned a fleet of taxi cabs before the war. He was able to send five children to boarding school on his profits. "We lost everything during the war," she said, shaking her head as she continued. "When the war ended, we heard that money grew on trees in America. I wanted so much to come to this country. Willie—he looked so handsome in his uniform—he wanted to bring Hanna and me home with him. There were many handsome soldiers, but only Willie talked of taking both of us to America."

I was beginning to understand how these two very different people ended up together. Even to my young self, this story seemed sad. But laughter flowed easily from her lips as she continued, causing us all to smile with her. My mother joined in her merriment, and she was rarely one to laugh. I could see that she too was in awe of this woman. We arrived at Hanna's house too soon, and we all felt sad to see our walk come to an end. "You must come over for coffee," Mom told her.

"Perhaps you have time for a cup with me now?" Mrs. Brady asked her. "I have sweets for the children."

"Just for one cup," my mother agreed.

And so the walk lingered into a visit, and a friendship was begun between my mother and Mrs. Brady. Mom marveled at how Mrs. Brady ground her own beans for their coffee. "I would never use canned coffee!" she proudly claimed, beaming as Mom thoroughly enjoyed the flavor and the aroma. Plans were made for a cup of the canned type at our house the next day, and we left. I was elated. I had pulled it off! Another day to look forward to spending time with Mrs. Brady!

A friendship did indeed develop between our mothers. Mom was delighted by Mrs. Brady's stories. She joked about her name: Irmgard, Anna, Maria, Katrina, Theresa. Her mother had five sisters and could not decide for which one she would be named. Rather than make a decision, her mother christened her with all five names. She laughed that each family member had called her by a different name since no decision had ever been made. "Willie began to call me Kitty, and even my father was using that name for me when we left for America." Kitty kept my mother laughing often. She was so happy and so pretty. Such a contrast to Willie! We were living in a small town in post-war times, but one couldn't help liking Kitty with her open ways and easy laugh, and her incredible beauty.

As Hanna's days continued in our school, she became more comfortable, picking up our language easily, but most of the children seemed to enjoy teasing her, calling her names when Miss Ostermeyer wasn't around to hear. Although this hurt her, she would never talk to me about it. I was in a difficult situation. Most of my classmates had been my friends all of my life. I was one of them. Billy Blanco was the only one who didn't make remarks about my loyalty to Hanna, although he joined in their teasing of her once in a while. And though I had begun my role as Hanna's protector only to be noticed by her mother, I had become quite fond of Hanna and her funny ways. One day when our mothers had taken us for a walk to the lake, Hanna and I had a sand castle contest. I worked diligently on mine until, satisfied with my results, I turned to Hanna's castle. My eyes opened

wide in amazement at her infinitely complicated structure. How could she make such a masterpiece with her hands? Before her mother could see this difference in our talents, I hastily flattened her castle. "Ginny, Ginny, Richie made my sandhouse go Kapoot!" she wailed to my mother. We all looked at each other and began laughing at her words. Sometimes Hanna really surprised me.

But the situation at school was becoming difficult for both of us. I wanted to be Hanna's friend, for I not only liked her, but I was still enraptured by her mother. But neither did I want to lose all my other friends. I was really in a pickle that any eight-year old would find difficult.

This continued until it reached a disastrous climax. Disastrous especially for Arnie Taylor, one of our more verbally caustic classmates. It all began one morning at recess, when Hanna, wishing to swing on the monkey bars, asked Arnie to move out of her way. "I ain't moving for no Nazi!" he shouted at her, standing firmly, his arms gripping his hips. Although Hanna had not heard the word Nazi before, she knew it was no compliment. "Nazi! Nazi!" the other children chimed in, encircling her and giggling. Hanna clenched the monkey bars, her eyes blurred with tears. She was staring hard at Arnie. I stood by helplessly, feeling her pain, but not daring to speak out for her. Slowly Hanna raised her arms as far back as her eight-year-old frame allowed, and pausing momentarily to steady herself, she pushed the bars forward with all her strength, releasing them towards Arnie with a grim satisfaction. We all watched in horror as they smashed into Arnie's eyes!

"Eeeiii!" Arnie shrieked, slumping to his knees onto the concrete playground, his hands clutching his face, blood seeping between his fingers. We stared in disbelief and horror at the blood—so much blood! Miss Ostermeyer ran toward us, her speed exaggerating her swaddle. "Hanna! What have you done!" she shouted, picking up Arnie in one swoop and carrying his huddled form quickly to our classroom. Mrs. Jones, the third grade teacher, who had witnessed the scene from her window, rushed to Arnie's aid with a wet cloth. By now Arnie was quiet, gliding into a semi-shocked state, his eyes squeezed tightly shut, still oozing blood. Miss Ostermeyer gently placed some blankets under his head and then covered him with her sweater. At this time our principal, Mr. Harrison rushed in. "I heard what happened," he said. "I've already called your mother, Arnie. She should be here soon." Arnie nodded, keeping his eyes shut, beginning to whimper quietly.

"Now Hanna, can you tell me what happened here?" Mr. Harrison asked her firmly. In all the commotion, I had gently led Hanna into the classroom, for she had remained statue-still on the playground. Now she simply turned her head slowly back and forth, tears running rivers down her cheeks. "You simply can't hurt someone like this, child. You must be punished. After Arnie's mother comes, I will take you home and talk to your mother."

Arnie's mother entered our room, beginning to shriek when she saw her prostrate, bleeding son. "Dear God, can he see?" she asked, rushing to his side. Arnie began to cry openly, now frightened beyond reason at the prospect of becoming blind. His whole body was trembling. "How did this happen?" his mother demanded, turning to Mr. Harrison, who remained calm. "It was a playground accident, Mrs. Taylor," he replied. Mrs. Taylor turned back to Arnie. "Doctor George is waiting for you at the hospital Arnie. You'll be ok." She lifted him gently with Mr. Harrison's help. They carried him to her car.

Everyone was staring accusingly at Hanna. She remained standing where I had left her, with drooping head and trembling chin. "Richie," Miss Ostermeyer singled me out, "tell me what happened." I hesitated, feeling my future depending upon my answer. To whom shall I give my loyalty? Something told me that this was an important moment in my young life. And so it was. I decided to tell the truth.

Miss Ostermeyer wagged her head back and forth in scorn as I told her of my classmates' daily taunting, and of how Arnie had called her a Nazi. "Everyone started calling her that, Miss Ostermeyer, and Arnie wouldn't move. That's how it happened."

"See what becomes of name-calling!" she told us all. Everyone was feeling pretty uncomfortable. There were no more accusing stares settling upon Hanna. We were all studying our feet, not daring to face Miss Ostermeyer. Mr. Harrison opened the door and directed his words to Hanna. "Well Hanna, let's get going. Your parents need to be told." She moved towards him sadly. I had never seen anyone look this forlorn as she followed him out the door.

I fretted about Hanna the rest of the day. Mr. Harrison returned much later to let us know that Arnie had needed surgery on his eyes and would be in the hospital for two weeks. He assured us that Arnie would not be blind. We offered no response to this news, remaining quiet and chagrined. Mr. Harrison did not mention Hanna. I began to ponder her fate. Do they arrest second-graders for something like this? Would she be able to return to our class? What would Willie do to her? He was not a reasonable man. My eyes constantly shifted to the clock as the afternoon stretched on. The bell finally rang and I sprang up and out of the classroom door. I hastened determinedly to Hanna's house.

"Ah Richie," her mother smiled as she opened the door to my urgent pounding. "Hanna can not come out. She has done a terrible thing this morning."

"Can't I talk to her?" I begged.

"No, she is being punished so that she will never forget what happened today. It will be a long time before she can come out again to play."

I nodded and turned to leave, shuffling slowly down the walk, worried sick about Hanna, feeling Kitty's eyes upon me. I turned back to her and asked, "Well, when will she be able to play again?"

We have decided, Richie, that she will be inside as long as Arnie is unable to go to school."

I nodded glumly and returned to my walking. I didn't remember ever feeling this badly. When I reached my house, Mom asked no questions. News spreads quickly in a small town. Even Timmy's happy shrieks did not stir me. I remained glumly silent all evening, trying to make sense of the day; but things just didn't come together. Something terrible had happened that day, and it still wasn't clear who was at fault. Our young world had been pierced by something ugly, and the effect was frightening.

Hanna was in class the next day much to my surprise. I had assumed that her imprisonment would exclude her from school. I smiled, grateful for her presence, but she showed no emotion, returning her attention quickly to the book she was reading. Hanna was afraid and this saddened me. She wanted no part of any of us. She had not been fooled by my meager support on the playground the morning before. Now I was offering my firm friendship and she was having none of it.

And so the next three weeks passed with Hanna in the seclusive state. She was not allowed to participate in recess. Her days consisted of school and her bedroom. So it would be until Arnie returned to our class. None of the other children seemed to harbor any ill feeling toward Hanna. Their treatment of her and their attitude toward her had changed. Her display of anger had won both their fear and their respect. And it had also made them acutely aware of their own part in causing Arnie's fate.

But Hanna did not respond to this. She entered and left our classroom each day, joyless. Kitty no longer accompanied her.

I was desolate. Because Hanna was in solitary confinement, I was not allowed to go with my mother when she would visit Kitty. And Kitty would not come to our house and leave Hanna alone. How I missed her cheerful banter! The days dragged on, heavy with my despair.

One day my mother returned from one of her visits with Kitty and said, "Arnie Taylor is returning to school tomorrow."

I looked at her, anxious and wide-eyed. "Does this mean Hanna can play again?" Mom placed her hand gently on my shoulder. "Yes it does." She added, "I hope you children have learned a lesson from this." Then she softened. "You really have missed Hanna, haven't you?" Tears found their way onto my cheeks as I nodded in reply. They weren't only from missing Hanna. But I couldn't tell this to my mother.

During supper, I worried about the next day. Mom and Dad politely ignored my fretting; and no one reminded me to eat my vegetables or drink my milk. I envisioned Arnie entering our classroom with swollen, blackened eyes, scowling at Hanna. I would not let him treat her badly, I vowed to myself. This time I would take a stand! That night, I fell asleep dreaming of rescuing Hanna from my threatening classmates, whisking her upon my stealthy white horse and bringing her to a grateful Kitty, who would apologize profusely to Hanna for subjecting her to such a dangerous crowd.

D-day arrived at seven the next morning when Mom called me to breakfast. My previous night's courage had left me. I thought about staying home from school. "I don't feel so good, Mom," I said as I entered the kitchen. She put her palm to my cheek and looked at me closely. "You don't feel hot, Ritchie, and your color is good. Do you hurt anywhere?" she asked. "Ah, yeah"—I thought quickly—"ah, my throat hurts." She inspected my throat. "It doesn't look red, honey." I thought again—"And my stomach!" I clutched my middle. "Oh dear," she worried. "I guess you'll miss your cousin's birthday party tonight." I had forgotten about Betty's party! She was having it at the skating rink in Spring Valley. Some things just have to be faced, I decided. Running away is not worth missing a skating party. Hanna had also been invited. I brightened at the thought that she might be allowed to go. Maybe her mother would come along! Mom noticed my change of heart. "Maybe you could try going to school and see how you feel," she suggested. "You can always call me if you feel worse." My mom was pretty smart.

Arnie's desk was still empty when I got to school. I glanced nervously at Hanna. Tension had replaced her usual apathy. She was staring at Arnie's desk, unaware of my presence behind her. The room was full of our usual pre-class chattering. The bell rang and the others quieted, awaiting Miss Ostermeyer's entrance. Arnie's desk was still empty when she entered the room.

Just as I began to fear that Mom had been mistaken, I heard familiar footsteps coming down the hall. I couldn't stop my quick intake of breath as Arnie entered the room. He was smiling. He walked to his desk and seated himself as if he had not been gone for three weeks. His eyes were not black and swollen as I had imagined they would be. He looked like the same old Arnie! I exhaled slowly with relief.

Hanna's form relaxed visibly before me. She did not take her eyes off Arnie, even after Miss Ostermeyer started our reading lessons. When it was her turn to read, she would look at him between sentences.

Finally, the recess hour arrived. I watched as Miss Ostermeyer walked over to Arnie, bending and whispering something to him. He nodded, remaining seated. She then approached Hanna in the same way. She, too, remained seated. What was she up to I wondered? "Richie, go on outside. We'll be along soon," she told me. Reluctantly I joined my classmates on the playground. Was this never to end? Billy ran up to me and asked if I wanted to race him and a few of the guys. I wasn't up to it, and he walked away disappointed. I sat on an empty swing and dragged my shoe along the pavement as I slowly glided back and forth.

Just as I was feeling more anxious than I thought I could stand, Arnie and Hanna walked out the door and onto the playground. Miss Ostermeyer was not with them. I jumped off the swing and walked over to Hanna, trying not to hurry. Everyone had stopped what they were doing to watch these two. Hanna walked directly towards the monkey bars and stopped. Jimmy Cox had been using them, but he smiled at Hanna and moved away to let her have a turn. Arnie followed her, but stayed a safe distance behind. Hanna grabbed the bars tightly, and for the first time in three weeks, I saw her face light up in a smile. She ran forward and then lifted her feet so that she could swing freely. Back and forth she swayed in glee, her hair flying every which way in the wind. When she had had enough, she released the bars and landed on her feet in front of me, still laughing. Now it was Arnie's turn. He and Hanna watched each other as he reached for the bars. Then he too was flying through the air. Hanna was watching and smiling. When he had finished, he released his grip and landed in front of us. He looked at Hanna uncomfortably. Then he looked at his feet, his right shoe rubbing the toe of his left.

"My dad says that I have to apologize for calling you a Nazi. He says that I should never call someone a name unless they deserve it. You shouldn't of done what you did, though. I didn't hit you or nothin'. But I don't want no more trouble. If I get into another fight, I'm grounded."

"You called me a Nazi," Hanna stated matter-of-factly. "That is why I threw the bars."

"Yeah," Arnie nodded. "I'm sorry, Hanna."

"I am not a Nazi!" she continued loudly. I could see her anger returning, her hands forming into fists at her side. I worried that history was about to repeat itself. I placed myself between them just in case.

"Aw—come on Hanna," Arnie replied. "I'll never call you that again. I promise!"

She remained stone-faced and angry for a moment longer, giving him a hard look that chilled me to the bone. I wondered at the effect it was having on Arnie. He must have read my thoughts, for he was unconsciously rubbing an eye, watching her carefully. Then he stepped towards her and offered his hand. Hanna looked at his hand as if she were staring at something strange. "Ok," she agreed. "We shake."

We gathered around them, relieved and happy. Hanna

offered her hand and they cemented an agreement to get along from that day on. And so Hanna had one more protector during our school years together. My rescue efforts were not needed that day. My friends were fair, after all; and my faith in humanity restored. Whatever evil had befallen us had been erased. Or so I thought.

Hanna became one of us. By third grade, she had mastered our language. By fourth grade, she had no trace of an accent, shedding herself of anything remotely German. I wonder if any of us realized that we had robbed Hanna of her German heritage that day on the playground. She turned her anger toward her German birthright, and was left with a fear of being rejected for this difference. She stored her native country permanently away.

Her mother remained firmly German. Her voice glimmered with her accent, much to Hanna's annoyance. I watched Kitty's eyes cloud the day that Hanna came home from school and refused to talk to her mother in German. "I am an American," she said resolutely. Kitty said nothing. She left the room looking quite sad. I think she understood why Hanna felt so strongly about this. I am just now, as an adult, realizing what we did to Hanna.

I never lost my adoration of Kitty. By the time I was in high school, she was only more beautiful. She seemed so wise. Many times I found myself at Hanna's house listening to her mother. She remained such a good storyteller. And she listened to me as if what I had to say was important. I'm sure she was aware of my schoolboy crush for her, but she handled it gently, taking care not to injure my pride. She and Mom remained fast friends. I heard her talk of her disappointment with America, and her life in this small town. Willie had brought her to America and then continued with his rowdy life. He had little time or money to give her. She wrote songs and poetry, selling them to pay for the kind of clothes she liked to wear. She refused to write her family for help, for she was embarrassed at her plight.

I watched sadly as the reality of life with Willie claimed her happy ways. Her sadness with her life turned her against Hanna, to whom she had been so close. She saw Hanna at the brink of a new, unexplored life—so much a contrast to her own situation. Hanna was confused by this change of heart in her mother, and was only too glad when she received a grant to go to Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. She hoped that the distance would mend the crack that had separated them. Many times during her last summer at home, I watched Hanna stand grimly before Kitty, with her hands clenched into fists, and I would remember that angry little girl on the playground. Hanna had not changed so much.

So I finally had Kitty to myself. I looked forward to the days she would come to our house. Sometimes she would sing songs she had written, her deep, German, guttural tone soothing all those who listened, her pain flowing smoothly with her words. At times like these, she was so like the beautiful lady that entered our classroom so many years before. We would spend hours talking of life. She knew so much about everything. I had truly come to love her as a friend, despite the difference in our ages. I had not yet fallen in love with any woman my own age, and found her comfort in my company flattering. I thought we would continue this way forever.

But time and life were no friends to Kitty. I remember coming home one day and finding Kitty crying in the living room with my parents. Mom gave me one of her "don't ask any questions" looks. Later, as Kitty grew thinner and paler, I understood the reason for her tears that day.

Hanna came home the week before Kitty died, grief-stricken. She reminded me so much of the withdrawn little girl who sat in front of me in that second-grade classroom as she sat next to her mother's bed. Together, we shared the pain of her dying. Kitty regained her old, happy nature in this last week of her life. She seemed glad to be leaving this world. The rest of us were bereft, and proved to be poor company.

One afternoon, only hours before she left us, Kitty asked to speak with me, alone. "Ritchie," she said, taking my hand, "don't ever hurt someone that you love. This is what comes of it." I asked her what she meant. "You must never tell this to Hanna!" she demanded. I nodded my promise and tightened my pressure on her hand as she continued. "Hanna's father—he did not die. He is an American. We never married. Times of war are so desperate! I loved him so much! But he—he did not love me enough. When I had Hanna, he returned to America, without us. That is why I married Willie. No one wanted a woman in my circumstance. No one but Willie. But I have been so unhappy here—perhaps that is why I became sick. Ah Ritchie, do not do this to a woman."

She drifted to sleep before I could reply. Hanna returned to the small room as I sat in my saddened state next to Kitty. I wondered if my face revealed the thoughts churning inside me. I felt guilty with this knowledge that I had promised to keep from Hanna. But now I understood. All those questions of my childhood about this special woman were answered.

Kitty never spoke to anyone again. Two hours later, she opened her eyes, lifted her palm and studied it carefully. Then she sighed and looked longingly at Hanna, she dropped her hand onto the bed and closed her eyes. And so the moments passed until an endless span of time slipped softly out of reach. Her shallow breaths finally ceased as we stood by in our helpless misery.

I kept my promise to Kitty. I didn't even let my mother know what she had told me, although I am certain that Kitty had confided this to her. Hanna finished school and moved to Santa Monica to begin a career in advertising. We wrote to each other once in a while. I never saw her after she graduated. There was really nothing here for her. Willie died before she left, leaving no place that she could call home.

And I have never fallen in love. No one could compare to my memories of Kitty. She was one special woman. Where could there be another lady with her intelligence, her beauty, and her grace? It would be a futile search.

Hanna called a few months ago to tell me that she was marrying an attorney she met when he had handled a case for her company. She wanted me to come to her wedding. "You are all that is left of what I call home, Rich," she told me. "It would mean a lot to me. I know Mom would have wanted you to be here."

"I agreed, and here I am in a small church in Santa Monica—almost late for the wedding. My plane had been delayed, and then I got caught in the unbelievable L.A. traffic. I'll never complain about driving in Chicago again!"

The sun is beginning to drop behind the mountains, leaving a golden cast on the solemn columns in this ancient, sacred building. An usher exclaims happily to me, "You must be Rich Jarvis. Hanna described you well. You're just in time. You don't believe in coming early, do you?" I nod, irritated with his ignorance of my difficulties in getting here. He seats me in the front of the church, introducing me to an attractive middle-aged woman who is the groom's mother. We smile at each other politely.

The organ begins the familiar wedding melody as everyone turns their eyes to the back of the church. There are no bridesmaids leading Hanna and her husband-to-be. As they approach arm-in-arm, I feel a familiar plunging deep inside my stomach. Hanna is the image of her mother! How could I have missed it before! Her hair is not chestnut. Her eyes are not violet. But the rest—the rest is Kitty. I remember Kitty's last words as my eyes fix upon this lovely woman walking toward me. It is Kitty's laughing grace before me, her sparkling presence. I am beside myself! It is Kitty's pain that I am feeling—that I am understanding. It is the pain savored by the loveless life she chose to live after Hanna's father left her. Hanna's eyes shine and widen when she sees me. Her smile is so happy—her eyes are so green, misted lightly with her tears.

I cannot force my eyes from her as she turns and faces the awaiting minister. My eyes follow her as they followed her mother when I was that awe-struck boy. Ah Kitty, I think, I did not see the woman in the girl. I have been looking for you all these years. All these years. . .

Somehow, I survive this ceremony. Somehow, I get to the reception. And somehow, I keep my tears hidden as Hanna holds me, as Hanna kisses me in her happiness—a happiness that will elude me as it did her mother. I watch her happy banter as I once watched Kitty. My feelings are tangled webs that I can't seem to break through.

Hanna's new mother-in-law interrupts my thoughts. "Tell me about Hanna's mother." Hanna hears this and her eyes catch mine. Our eyes hold onto each other as I ponder my reply. Our eyes remain fused as I say, "She was, Mrs. Greenburg, simply a wonderful woman." And turning away from Hanna, I think: an impossible question, Mrs. Greenburg. How can I describe a misplaced woman? How can I explain a misplaced love?

Rose Mauch

His eyes searched the dawn for a meadow-lark's flute
But his windows were pocked with earth from the rain
And all he could see was a vestige of pain
Where the poplars once citadeled his play-house retreat
Away from the farm and down by the creek..

His weak legs stood to peer at it all
But strength being strength, he begin to fall
He grasped his head as his heart nearly fled
He rested his head..

SON OF MAN—WHAT DID YOU DO WITH MY GARDEN—?
Then a whimper spoke that feathered the air
"I'm not a bird—A Whooping Crane would do
Somewhere lately I have read
A small boy shot the last one dead
It died with a quiver and it never bled—
That is my answer."

Bel Angelo

Being a Mother

Means you begin each night with the thought of sleep waltzing through your innermost mind. But once there, the awareness of your newborn baby stops the dance and you find yourself alert, not knowing what to expect and therefore expecting everything.

It means you teach her things you didn't know you knew. You show her how much you love her by being your best. Not always THE best, just your best.

It means you argue with your mother—"children should not be spanked"! You agree to pacify her, but 20 minutes later when there are soap suds all over the bathroom floor and in the toilet, and bubbling out of the cat's nose, you pick up the little darling and spank her anyway.

Being a mother means you tickle her because she likes it so much. You rock her long past your level of endurance when she's sick, and you lose your mind when you think you just heard her fall down the stairs, even though she's at the top, safe, banging her feet.

Being a mother is sitting in the emergency room for hours with a crying baby and a cranky husband, only to find out that you read the thermometer wrong.

Being a mother means you call everyone you know when she says her first words and make such a fuss that she's considering never saying another word. And it means you use a million rolls of film on all the "cute" things she does.

Being a mother means walking long after your feet say stop, so she can see all the animals at the zoo. And you use four more rolls of film. It means she can get out of trouble by holding up her little arms and saying to you "kiss, mommy, kiss?"

Being a mother means her room is always a mess five minutes after you've cleaned it, and trying unsuccessfully to teach her how to pick up her own toys.

Being a mother gives you a whole new outlook towards your own mother, and allows you to become friends.

Being a mother is making mistakes, and learning from them, teaching and being taught. It's laughing, crying, loving, needing, and being needed. It's God's greatest gift to women. Most of all, it's never being alone in the world. Always having one person who accepts you just the way you are, without asking you to change, and loving you for you. And it means always having someone to love.

Bonnie S. Davis

The Devil's Loom

The devil's loom can clothe a fool
And make of him a king.
Who owns the world, but not his soul;
Therefore, owns not a thing.

A robe of false pride hides the shame,
Of those who know truth naught.
A fool is who who proudly wears
A crown the devil bought.

Beverley Topa



Dale Fleming
Drawing by Dale Fleming

**Life
(For Pat)**

A friend asks for a raise,
He wants more money
to buy himself new things.

A friend is going on vacation,
She wants new clothes
to wear while she is away.

A friend argues with his wife,
He wants more freedom
to live his life irresponsibly.

A friend learns the television is broken,
She wants to watch
her favorite afternoon soap opera.

A friend discovers the gin bottle is empty,
He wants another martini
to help him face himself.

A friend has gained twenty pounds,
She wants to wear a smaller size
to impress a man who does not love her.

A friend asks for a promotion,
He wants to be president of the company
so he can have more prestige.

A friend learns she has cancer,
She wants life.

Natrona Wilson



The Last Train Ride

Boxcars and boxcars,
 People packed in.
 Skin against wood,
 Skin against skin.
 The last stop,
 The camp.
 And the people, the people,
 They all look the same—
 Slouched shoulders
 Flour-white faces
 Tired bone protruding
 Through sunken cheeks
 Parched lips
 Dried tears
 Dark bottomless eyes
 Buckled knees
 That fall
 On cindered ground—
 Auschwitz
 Dachau
 Belsen.
 The German tongue repeating—
 Jawohl, jawohl, jawohl.
 The moral stench can't be found
 In history books.
 Anne Frank, delicate, pure,
 Left us her diary.
 Heavy, thick, sticky black tar
 Would be easier to swallow
 Than the sunlight
 In her words.

Donna Strabarry

Drawing by Dale Fleming

Modernitis

Racing down
 Cement labyrinths
 On a 300 horse-power go-cart
 Trying to make ends meet
 To pay for a thousand dollar chocolate bar,
 Eyes riveted
 On a 12-function digital watch,
 Your heart beats
 At a 15% increased rate
 As you dream
 Of the perfect silicon mate;
 But—
 Frightened, frantic, tired child,
 After-hour heroes
 Cannot fly.

Annie Guilbeau Stearns

Grus Americana

Son of man, what did you do with my garden—?
The startled old man sat up in his bed
The one-time boy with the tossed head
But not a single word he said
He did not know
The path his frightened voice would go
So he kept silent..

He tried to envision through his eyes
A farm less littered with plough and hoe
A creek now stilled where a spring once flowed
Of water-cress pressed between his teeth
Its strange tart taste as he sprinkled salt
He knew it all—
The minnow-box by the old red tile
The wing-clipped Canadian honking his horn
The fresh morning air with its unique flair
For carrying messages from new-kilned bread
He knew it all—
But his pouting-lips refused..

Son of man: What did you do with my garden—?
He gathered thoughts to make a sound
But all that he loved was not around
The clock had sucked them into the ground
He caught a tear as it trickled down
But never a word he said..

See It In Her Eyes

Her eyes tell much of tragedy
 of hunger and of fear.
In them there's a story of suffering—
 hot sun in the day, cold air in the night,
 not enough food and blankets—
 things the government won't provide.

We try to understand.
We try to help.
Everyone sympathizes, some even cry,
But we could never understand
 being there—
 seeing a mother watch her child die.
Existing on love and dreams cannot be enough—
 bloated bodies
 all skin and bones,
 they stumble in masses to camps
 so far away from home—
 for food and shelter and for life.

She must feel so alone,
 to know it is so much better somewhere else.
A distant land she sees only in her dreams—
 because even the great amounts of money
 they send just isn't enough.

How long will she live?
 This her eyes do not say.
But with a child's will and determination
and our help
She CAN see another day.

Lisa Layer

Armistice Day, 1941

There stands a statue cold and hard
At Gainesville's county court house yard
In tribute to the cause that lost
And to the men who paid the cost,
That none forget who marched and sparred.

We stood in honor in that yard
To hear a soldier old and hard
Orate on why we never lost
A previous war though evil-starred.

He said we'd win with no holds barred,
No matter price, how long, how hard,
How many lives the war might cost,
Because we never yet had lost.
Our honor stood, no record marred.
There stands a statue cold and hard.

Henry White

For Lack of Love

How bitter will our flowers grow
When chilled by wintry winds of woe,
And twisted by a cruel, hard grasp
So that by-standers groan and gasp
On seeing torment rendered so.

Refraining from swift judgement's throe,
Compassion towards a constant "No!",
All unkind thoughts we ought no rasp,
For bitter will our flowers grow.

Where we as children battered low,
As adolescents, treated so,
Whether held by lock and hasp,
By hand or tongue's abusive asp,
A hatred-harvest they would sow.
Then bitter will our flowers grow.

Henry White

Plant Killer

She picked the pedals
off the flower
and said,
"He loves me, he loves me not."

She smiled at me lovingly.

She thinks I love her,
But how can I
when
She kills flowers that murderous slut.

She doesn't know I'm a florist.

Lee Rademacher

Requiescat in Pacem

Through all the corners
of my mind,
I wander.
Turning, with a wond'ring glance,
around
I stumble 'cross the tarnished baubles
that mark the successes
of my past.
Suddenly, I come to the wall
which my mind
has erected over the past few months.
Examining its construction,
I finally move to plug up the tiny hole
which I had previously
considered unimportant.
Yet the pressure is too great
to withstand the feeble stopper
which is myself.
Like that dike, long ago,
my wall now crumbles
unrestrained.
Technicolor zephyrs and
a deafening cacophony
of dissonant noises
come bursting out,
refreshing my numbed memory
with pain
unsuccessfully suppressed.
Dragging me down with vicious intensity
through a
glistening, sucking
maw
into the
darkness of solitude,
the black agony of
betrayal.
I am digested by
an ebony whirlpool of
unrelieved depression.
Subsiding beneath
the crashing swirling waves,
I pass from all
knowledge and comprehension.
Rest in sorrow.
Rest in peace.

Kerri-Ellen Kelley

I see
in your childlike eyes
a playfulness
as in
summer breezes
that frolic
along the lake shore.

I see
in your smile
a pleasantness
as in
vibrant springtime tulips
leaping up
from winter's icy chains.

I feel
in your arms
a tenderness
as in
autumn gold sunlight
warmly caressing
crimson-velvet roseleaf.

I see
in your body
an endurance
as in
a leafless snow-cold oak,
awaiting
April's dawn.

Natrona Wilson

From Atheist to Apologist For C.S. Lewis

He came with
pools of intellect
He mastered
many a tongue
He brought along
his logic
His searching
had begun

His aim was
to disprove You
But You helped him
to believe
His plan was
to reject You
But You led him
to receive

He began to
really understand
How Your love
can make us new
He became a
great apologist
By the time
he was through

Diana L. Crawford

No More Songs

Will there be a time
when there are no more songs,
and no one left to sing,
or even weep over wrongs
of nations;
And will there be a time
when plants no longer drink
mist from the wind,
but wither and sink
into atomic dust?
Will there be a time
when conflicts end
in nuclear spread,
leaving no one to care
or to count the dead;
Will there be a time
of no more songs,
and no one left to sing?

Dorothy Stuart Swenson

The Bar

The saloon is sometimes called a bar
Whoever named it, named it well
A bar to manliness and wealth
A door to want and broken health
A bar to honor, pride, and fame
A door to brief, and sin, and shame
A bar to hope, a bar to prayer
A door to darkness and despair
A bar to honored useful life
A door to senseless, brawling strife
A bar to all that's true and brave
A door to every drunkard's grave
A bar to joys that home imparts
A door to tears and aching hearts
A bar to heaven, a door to hell,
Whoever named it, named it well.

Written by an inmate in a prison in
Illinois, who wishes not to be
identified.



Drawing by Dale Fleming

Irma

Well, here I am, a growd up man, a'standing watchin my wife Irma doin her thing.

It's sure not like it used to be, not since the day I cum home frum sittin and jawin with the fellers down to the courthouse and there was Irma, a'settin on the front porch, big as life, all gussied up in her Sunday clothes, with her cheeks painted and her hayr all frizzed out and her a'sittin there lookin fer all the world like it wuz a big ole holiday.

So I sez to her, "Irma, what's goin on?" And she sez, smilin thet thin-lipped imitation smile thet women get when you do sumpin en they're just waitin fer you t'ask em what's wrong so they kin look at sumpin miles away and say. . . . "Nothin."

So I sez agin, "Irma, somebody up an die 'er sumpin?" en to be perlite I added, "What's wrong, Honeybee?" I allus figger a little sugar once't a while don't hurt none so long as it's free.

En she sez, "Don't you think none of yer honeybees er gonna change anythin this time, cuz they ain't. You been butterin up around here too long and just a'pushin me down and down at the same time so's I don't feel like nothin but a mule, fit fur doin chores while you go gallivantin through the county a'clacking yore teeth en talkin yore fool haid off with them good ole boys o'yers.

So I sez to her, I sez, "Irma, what call you got to be gettin so uppity? Look et thet grass, it's almost high nough to get lost in, cain't hardly see the house 'tall, it's gettin so high. When ya gonna cut it, Irma?"

Y'see, I try to change the subject when Irma starts a'ridin thet hobby-horse of hers, sorta put her mind on other things, you might say. So I sez agin, "Irma, when you gonna get yoresef movin en do sumpin bout thet grass?"

En Irma sez, "I hev news fer you, Sonny, I hev cut that there grass fer the last time." So I sez, "Why Irma, honey, what call you got to yell like thet, you gotta bean up yer nose?" And she rared hersef up straight and looked me right in the eye en sez, "Sonny, I ain't got no bean up my nose, ner no halter on me neither, but I bin listenin to one of then New York ladies on the radjo en hearin bout thet there ERA en I hev dee-cided to be a lib-er-ated woman. En thet, in case you don't unnerstand, Sonny, en you wouldn't, thet means I don't hev to do nothin I don't want to."

Sometimes I jist don't know what to say the way Irma gets things twisted in her haid, so I thought a minit, en while I wuz thinkin Irma sed, "En one of the nothins I don't want to do most of all, Sonny, is cut thet grass."

So I sez, "Irma, honey, I'm afraid you got this whole ERA thing backward," en she bust right in en sez, "Don't look down yer nose at me, Sonny-boy, en don't think you kin treat me like no sex object neither!"

I thought we wuz talkin bout grass, but she allus way ahead of me, hoppin frum one thing t'other like a flea on a hound dog, en I don't neither look down my nose being as it has a big hump inna middle of it ever since I fell off thet greased pole at the County Fair last year en if I look down thet hump my eyes cross, tain't nothin innerestin lookin at it anyhow; so I know she's wrong bout thet, en I do know my wife, Irma, en she has not objected to sex since she wuz twelve en we hid in the hayloft, fact is, she got no objections bout thet t'all, so I sez, "Irma, what in tarnation you goin on bout?" En she sez, "You jist keep way frum me, you shuvinest pig, you! You jist keep away frum me!"

"Keep away frum ya? I ain't even come near ya," I sez, "Yore yellin so loud they kin hear ya in the next county. If I cum any closer I'll go deaf."

I set down on the bottom step. I cud see this wuz gonna

be a long an hungry night.

We din't neither one of us say nothin fer a spell en then Irma gets outta thet ole, squeaky rocker of hers en walks over to the railin' still lookin like she's waitin' fer sum messenger frum Heaven to come a'flyin' in outta the sunset, en she sez, "Things er gonna be diffrunt 'round these parts, Sonny, frum now on things er gonna be diffrunt cuz I hev seen the LIGHT."

I thought to myself thet a few diffrunt things might be good fer the old place but I din't say nothin cuz I cud see she wuz just warmin her engines, ready to race off any minit.

So I waited, en she sez to me, "Sonny, you men bin hevin things too easy too long, frum now on you gonna hep me clean the house, en you gonna hep me with the kids."

En I sez, "Doggone it, Irma, you been dippin yer nose in the dandy-lion wine agin?"

En she sez, "Sonny, I been doin no sech thing, I jist tole you, I AM L-I-B-E-R-A-T-E-D!"

En I sez, "I'd like to know what you been liberated frum, Irma," en she sez, "Frum you, en frum housework," en I sez, "Hold on there, Irma, you mean you sent en gotta dee-voce behine my back?" En she sez, "Oh Sonny, sometimes yer jist plain dumb." En I sez, "I may be dumb, but I ain't crazy, Irma," en she sez, "Oh yes you are, Sonny, if you think I'm gonna take care of this house en them kids of yores thout never gettin no pay."

Then I sez, "Who pays me, Irma, who pays me?" En she sez, smilin thet tight smile like her face wuz froze, "Oh, you git yores all right when the crops cum in, en I don't get nothin but a new pair of shoes er a new dress once a year, en thet's not right. I want you to know I am a PUR-SON, Sonny, a PUR-SON! Ya hear me Sonny?"

En I sez, "I'm sure glad to hear thet Irma, I'm sure glad to hear thet. Watcha think I thought you wuz all these years, Irma, a nanny goat?"

So she looks at me kinda funny en then she sez in thet quiet voice thet means sumpin big en bad is comin, en she sez, "Sonny, you stop twistin everthin I say, en listen good. I am a LIBERATED PURSON, en I got feelins, en I want to do my own thing, en everthins gonna be equal round here from now on, er I'm leavin!"

Well, thet did it.

I cud see there wuz no way we wuz gonna hev any peace round here till Irma got her own way, so thet's why I'm standin here in the kitchen doin' dishes, while my Irma's out doin the plowin' en callin it her own thing.

Things shure hev changed since my Irma became a L-I-B-E-R-A-T-E-D P-U-R-S-O-N.

Things shure hev changed.

June Shipley

Heaven

One afternoon, a man was confronted by his grandson and asked a question about death. The little boy asked his grandfather where people go when they die. The man sat the child on his knee and pointed toward the sky. He replied that people go to heaven when they die. He went on to describe how pleasant and peaceful it is in heaven. He told the child that heaven is a place where everyone cares for one another and where everyone is treated equally. He described it as a beautiful place, filled with tall trees, green grass, and clear rivers. In the middle of his description, the telephone rang. The old man was told that a very close friend of his had passed away. He was saddened by this news, and he began to cry. The little boy looked confused.

Angela Atchison

The Blue Suit

He was a stately man, his bald head covered by a stocking cap at chilly times. His piercing blue eyes were clouded by age, their vision blurred, but nonetheless all-seeing. His cheeks were crowded with tiny red capillaries which glowed under the transparent skin of his face, from a distance giving the misleading appearance of robust health. His stooped body still had a majestic quality about it, unaffected by age. The pungent scent of Old Spice lingered on the recliner in which he spent most of his time toward the end, as his active mind was held captive by a deteriorating body.

His daily uniform of a dress shirt worn under a sloppy, comfortable sweater gave way on occasion to his one and only dark blue suit. Donning the blue suit signaled that, due to his longevity, it was time for him to say farewell to yet another loved one preceding him in death. The cruel loss of his wife of so many years had caused him to wear the suit to her funeral. He sat quietly and received mourners, his head bowed. Occasionally he labored to get up, visiting his beloved wife one more time. "She's so cold," he said, as he touched her lovingly. And he wept. He grieved mightily, but went on without her—on to argue politics another day, to cheer for his favorite baseball team a few more years, to listen carefully to the news on his specially amplified radio, wanting not to miss anything that went on in the world.

His main occupation, between naps, had become soliciting lively conversations with anyone who found the time and patience to listen. Arguments were his favorite kind of exchange—they kept his blood churning, his mind functioning. He was hard-pressed to find a good argument; however, his overwhelming reservoirs of experience and knowledge intimidated his audience. Still, he loved to yell. The vociferous presentation of his views fanned a fire smoldering deep inside that was in danger of going out. He maintained that he had to shout and be shouted at, since his hearing was impaired; but when he was holding a calm conversation, he would speak quietly and, in turn, easily hear voices raised only slightly. He had lost the ability to make eye contact, so during these quiet moments he substituted his sense of touch to help communicate—he often held his listener's hand.

He spent weeks in a hospital, surrounded by his children, struggling to rebel against the ravages of time. He kept fighting even when others had given up, challenging death with all the arguments he had left in him. The doctors said it was impossible for him to exist, his very structure perishing around him. But live on, he did—another day, and then another, and another.

He lay still and cold in the casket, hands that once held mine, crossed over his chest; his body having made the final defiance over his spirit. My grandfather had on his blue suit.

Patricia A. Nestor

Mother Goose: Update

NOTICE

The following report has been released accordisng to guidelines set forth in the "Public's Right to Know." The information herein was released through a spokesperson for Mother Goose, presently residing on Storied Lane, Rhymesville. The characters' prior activities are a matter of public record. This follow-up information was voluntarily supplied by Ms. Goose

without coercion, threats of reprisal, or promise of monetary recompense. Except for minor translations from Olde English into more current terms, the transcript is as received. The issuer accepts no responsibility for the veracity of any statement herein, or any legal action stemming therefrom.

Old Mother Hubbard, for the want of a bone,
Was plagued by her dog's woeful groan.
Just because the cupboard was bare,
There was no need for despair,
She sold the dog, so that,
There was money, to buy a cat.

Little Jack Horner in my memory lingers,
A boy who ate plum pie with his fingers.
If a child's manners are so lacking,
How quickly taught with a wacking,
And soon thereafter he was able,
To sit properly and eat at the table.

There was Little Boy Blue who tooted his horn.
His playing was so bad, it left him forlorn.
No matter how good a musician's act is,
He'll never get there without practice.
So he mastered the notes, scales, and phonics,
And now plays trumpet with the philharmonics.

Jack used to jump a lighted candle
Which always burned down to the handle.
Replacing them became too expensive,
So working his skills more extensive,
To greater heights and improving styles,
He's now preparing for the Olympic trials.

Poor Simple Simon was always penniless,
But that didn't discourage him, any less.
He married the piewoman's only niece
And took over the pie factory's lease.
Now as full partner in the store,
They don't call Simon "Simple" any more.

Jack and Jill, took a tumble down the hill.
Quite a few people, joke about it still.
Those funky kids, had what it took.
They practiced with rope, halter and hook.
Then went back, to give it their best,
And just last week, climbed Mt. Everest.

Little Bobby Shaftoe, went to sea,
Said he'd come back and marry me
But by being a doubting Thomas,
I sued him for breach of promise.
And took the rascal to court,
For having a girl in every port.

The Barber, Barber that shaved a pig,
Got himself into something really big.
Lives in Hollywood, wears dark glasses,
He now offers master classes,
To up and coming "young and groovies,"
Studying animal make-up for the movies.

Little Miss Muffet once scared by a spider,
Called on her brother, who's an insecticider.
On her Tuffet, she eats all day,

And any smart spider, would stay away.
He's right beside her, wearing a galosh,
And if one appears, it goes squash.

Georgy Porgy got hooked on pudding and pie.
He'd kiss the girls until they'd cry.
He hence became so overly stout,
All but one of his teeth fell out.
The last girl he took out on a date,
Was his cousin . . . in eighteen eighty-eight.

Humpty Dumpty survived the fall,
But never got back, onto the wall.
He did cash in on the notoriety,
Joining the restaurant owner's society
Where he did exceedingly well,
Serving omelettes . . . on the half-shell.

The Jack of Heart's crimes, started in the bakery,
Then branched out, to other forms of fakery.
His kleptomania was hard to control,
Especially for one out on parole.
And breaking the law with no regret,
Got him eight to ten years . . . in Joliet.

Diddle Diddle Dumpling my son John,
Used to sleep with his clothing on.
Until I wrote to Dear Ms. Abby,
Who called the custom, "mighty shabby."
What she offered, as a trial,
Was to sleep, wearing only a smile.

There was Tom Tom, the piper's son,
Who stole a pig and away did run.
He was chased and finally caught
And listened well to what he ought.
The advice so changed his life's direction,
He now works for the Department of Correction.

Old King Cole was a merry soul indeed,
But now-a-days, a king is not what we need.
His pipe and his bowl are with him yet,
But he's traded his fiddlers for a quartet.
He has sold off his royal residency,
And now thinks of running for the presidency.

The Baa Baa Black Sheep hasn't any wool,
Foreign imports have treated him very cruel.
The market price, as bad as its gotten,
Has it cheaper to make cloths from cotton.
After one bag for the master and one for the dame,
The internal revenue service demands two of the same.

Little Bow Peep's sheep took it "on the lam,"
Until losses were more than she could stand.
Finally seeking modern technical advice,
She equipped each with a homing device.
Now whether the sheep are hidden or seen,
She tracks them all on a radar screen.

Contrary Mary spent hours in her garden.
Growing cockle shells caused it to harden.
The pretty little maids all left in distress,
But Mary, undaunted, became a success.
She gave up all her fruitless toil,
When, underground, they discovered oil.

Peter Peter, Pumpkin Eater, kept his wife in a shell.
After three kids, things didn't work out very well.
She insisted on a new house, and of course,
When he said "no," she sued for divorce.
Alimony was so expensive, he couldn't carry her.
The only way out. . . was to remarry her.

Wee Willie Winkie used to check on the kids,
To see if by eight, they all closed their lids.
But "making the scene" in his night gown,
Had too many people "putting him down."
He has now retired, to the Bahamas,
Where he is seen beachcombing in his pajamas.

END OF REPORT

S. L. Ostain

Spend an Hour With Me

When I look at the sea,
it reflects you and me,
and a love that has no end.

When I pick up the sand,
let it sift through my hand,
I think mostly of you, my friend.

Spend an hour with me.
I'm sure that you'll find
Great treasures of gold.
Won't you stay and take time?

Come look in my eyes,
they do not speak lies,
just of love that I cannot let grow.

But I wish you could see
deep down inside me
the love that my heart cannot show.

Spend an hour with me.
I'm sure that you'll find
Great treasures of gold.
Won't you stay and take time?

Let us share our smile
and just talk for awhile.
We've traveled, but still have so far.

Let us become good friends,
no one knows when it ends,
and we all need to know who we are.

Spend an hour with me.
I'm sure that you'll find
Great treasures of gold.
Won't you stay and take time?

When I look at the sea,
it reflects you and me,
and a love that has no end.

When I pick up the sand,
let it sift through my hand,
I think mostly of you, my friend.

Diana Crawford

The Festival

At roadside an old shed
Stands as if rooted,
Its crooked boards of silver gray
Are strung with beaded bittersweet;
Its rafters
Hung with ears of vari-colored corn.
The spicy wind teases chrysanthemums,
Leans on the layered clouds
And sends them scudding like tall ships
Across the turquoise sky.
Chicory plays beside the road
While clumps of black-eyed susans sway
On slender stems and wave to passers-by.
Jewelled fields embellished with
Orange pumpkins and cabbages
That spread like great blue roses
Stretch to the orchard
Where the twisted trees are heavy hung
With crimson ornaments.
Dried stalks as luminous as shafts of sunshine
Lie scattered near the patch
Where spent tomatoes sprawl on the ground,
Their weary leaves concealing
The last few scarlet fruits of their hard labor.

Nothing can stop the orderly progression
Of seasons;
They and we change rapidly—
In Autumn
We should pause
In ceaseless doing,
That grinds to nothingness,
And simply be.

Winter comes suddenly.

June Shipley

Goddess School

I wish I could go to a Goddess School,
To learn so much and know each rule.
I bet it'd be so keen and neat.
Think of all the gods I'd meet.
Greek gods like ZEUS, and HERA his bride.
Who sit in the heavens so vast and wide.
I'd meet JUPITER, NEPTUNE, VENUS, and MARS;
And all the constellations among the stars.
I'd ride a bus called The Moonbeam Express.
I'd study on SATURN, and all the rest.
I'd get my schedule from the messenger, MERCURY.
And meet brave heroes like one called HERCULES.
I'd take a subject called Mythology.
My favorite class would be Astrology.
I'd learn history from the giant TITANIANS,
And be taught science from the great ATLANTIANS.
I'd know math from the ancient PYRAMIDS.
And play at recess with all the gods' kids.
I'd learn to spell in the Sanskrit way.
I'd write a Mythos for Gradulegend Day.
I'd receive my diploma by gift of wings,
And know the songs that a Goddess sings!

Carolyn Richter

Devil's Fog

And a child walks in your mist,
Lost and bewildered;
While your cat claws
Shred his mind and rake his soul,
As he stumbles through a maze of lost horizons,
Enshrouded in the rags of self-control.

In the stupor of lost twilights,
He lies grieving;
While spilling his tomorrows from the till.
Until youth's ragged pockets come up empty,
And tomorrow's dreams lie spent
And ever still.

Yet, you flower,
In the fields of life's pollution.
And you seed the lost tomorrows he won't see.
While, the world would plow you under,
With its grieving,
For the man that this lost boy was meant to be.

Beverley Topa



Photograph by Kelly Mickow, Highland High School



Photograph by Jeff Ossello

Nothing Stays the Same

It started out like all Halloweens. Black paper cats, ghosts and crude orange pumpkin cutouts, were splattered in every classroom. Grocery stores had stocked up on candy corn, taffy apples and multi-colored paper costumes. Even the air held a certain liveliness, predicting the nights merriment.

Being my favorite holiday, I knew nothing could go wrong. The one exception was a nun who could turn it into hell. Sister Matilde, known as "Mighty Matilda and her Killer Wooden Spoon", didn't believe in such "devils play." She protected us by adding extra homework and a dozen "Our Fathers" before leaving school.

After the bell rang, I waited for my best friend, Earline Grotz. While pushing up her blue sparkled cats eyes and yanking up her knee socks, Earline would say, "When I grow up, I'm going to be..." The only problem was Earline changed her mind as often as she did her crushes. This week, she was going to be a nuclear physicist and a part time swim coach. Earline and I started home on our usual route, being careful not to step on any cracks. We'd check out PeeWee's Hobby store, the Custard Shop, then stand in front of Switzers Bakery. Breathing in warm scented air, our surgary spell would sometimes be interrupted by creepy ol' Dickie Knight. Dickie and his equally nasty pal, Bubbie Bobowski, would try to spit in our hair.

Cutting through the field of the "Million Grasshoppers," we'd dodge them with our eyes closed. Earline told me that the grasshoppers would spit tobacco in your eye if you didn't run fast enough. I never disputed the fact, simply because I never hung around long enough!

Panting, after breaking the quarter mile in two minutes flat, I asked Earline what costume had she picked out.

"A nuclear physicist," she said dryly.

"That's dopey. Everyone'll just think you're a doctor—or dentist!" By now I'm shrieking, "How are they gonna figure

you aphysz, phyza..."

"Phys-icist," she corrected me calmly.

Yanking up her socks and adjusting her glasses, she ignored my faces and asked me about my costume.

"A ghost," I snorted.

"Sure, sure. You say that every year," she smugly recollected. "What are ya gonna be really?"

"A ghost dammit," I screamed. "Geez Earline, ya made me lose my temper. Now I've got to confess to Father Pavneka that I've cursed sixteen..."

"Seventeen..."

"... times since my last confession. He'll make me go to mass twice a day until I'm thirty-six years old!"

By this time, Earline was jerking up her socks out of embarrassment. I felt bad and apologized, knowing that it took Earline at least two days to get over any kind of boat rocking.

Making our plans to meet at 6:00 p.m., euphoria started to set in. Nothing could ruin the night, except having chili for dinner. Swinging my plastic red Barbie Doll bookbag above my head, I sang out loud, "only three more hours to, pop-corn balls, carmel and my favorite, C-H-O-C-O-L-A-T-E!!"

The bounce in my walk came to a halt when I stepped into the house. (Sniff. sniff.) "Chili—yuckk" Ma's chili was one part beef to six cans of kidney beans. While serving up my misfortune, Ma would lament about all the "starving kids in Europe." When I made faces at my rice, she'd remind me of all the starving kids in China.

It was 5:56 p.m. Dinner and dishes took what seemed three days. Mom was still making final adjustments on my ghost costume. The costume may have been the customary sheet with three holes, but mine had hair! Mom had sewn on twenty strips of navy blue ribbon with white polka-dots. The best part was, the lip hole was outlined in Mom's best lipstick; "Fire-engine Red."

In our neighborhood, we had to first deal with the little brother or sister. The problem was handled efficiently and above all, quickly. Holding their hand, reminding them to say 'thank you,' you also had to remove their mask every third house. I don't know what it is with little kids, but they get so excited—they forget to breathe. Tired of being spooky and needing to go to the bathroom, little kids didn't stay out longer than twenty-five minutes.

By the time I dumped off my little sister Barb and brother Mikie, I met up with Earline. Second shopping bag in hand, each inviting porch light and grinning jack-o-lantern beckoned us to sample the wares. Ol' Tillie Kaczmariski gave out fudge, while Mrs. York gave out the usual, three pennies each. The sweet sound of 'thump-crackle' continued, block after block, from the Brittons to the Budzinskis.

So far, no one had recognized me. But every witch, clown and fairy princess that we'd passed thought Earline was a doctor—or dentist. By 7:15, Earline had resigned to being (not JUST a doctor), but a brain surgeon.

While telling Earline what time I had to be home, we watched Dickie Knight, dressed as a fat lady with curlers, throw a rotten egg at some poor, unsuspecting kid. Thanking God it wasn't us, we ran into my brother Frankie (a mummy), and his twin friends, Ken and Kevin Kitchen (matching scarecrows).

"Hi Ken and Kevin BATHROOM!," Earline and I harmonized. After a few arm punches were traded, Frankie managed to blurt out the exciting news: Dog N' Suds Drive-In was handing out cartons of chocolate milk. A whole carton!

With the words, 'chocolate milk' sliding off my lips, I left Earline in a whirl of wet leaves.

My brothers warning about not getting home, faded behind me.

Slipping on the evening dew, I noticed that there were less trick-or-treaters. Porch lights flicked out, screen doors slammed with a 'click' and pumpkins began to droop sadly.

The unseasonable southern winds gave the rubbing tree limbs an eerie strain, while the half-covered moon cast hideous shadows. Boy, did I wish I were home.

With one block left, I realized I was the only one—or so I thought. Pulling the sheet off my head to get a better view and more air, I caught, from the corner of my eye, someone running towards me. I closed my eyes to clear them only to open them, smack into a mad man's eyes. "Chuckie!" I gasped.

Everyone's mother told them to "stay away from Chuckie Swaringa." We were told to walk on the other side or even in the opposite direction. Mothers were great at telling you HOW to stay away from Chuckie, but they NEVER told you what to do if HE came to you.

Chuckie wasn't in costume. With blond flat-top and plump body he was dressed in the usual way—green plaid bermudas, pink striped shirt, buttoned to the neck, crew socks and black canvas shoes, complete with toes poking through.

He was screaming in a pretend witch's voice, something about a 'kiss.' I tried to turn and run, but the shopping bag got caught between my legs. Chuckie caught me by my braids and whirled me around. In the street light, I could see Chuckie's flat-top bristle up while sneering at me with (gulp) 'fire-engine' red lips!

I offered my bag of candy for my freedom, but he proceeded to wrap me up in toilet paper. Humiliated with knees knocking, I heard a male voice come from behind Chuckie, telling him that I was 'too ugly' and not his type.

He then let go of me, long enough for me to pull the sheet over my head, only to discover that the holes were in back. Tripping over the curb and spilling half my treasures, I had managed to straighten out the sheet with a minimum of only two nasty words.

Rounding the corner of my block, the warmth of my porch light searched for me. I noticed the wind had died to a whisper, while the moon brightened up the mysterious shadows. Something else had changed—I didn't feel eleven any more. Although I had conquered everything between dark shadows and weird Chuckie Swaringa—I felt sad. I knew Halloween would never be the same.

M. J. Thamm

Part of the Family

"Mom seemed upset this morning," Tom said.

I looked up, startled by the sound of his voice.

"What do you think is the matter?" asked Kevin. He was sitting on the floor watching television. Tom, Cindy and I were on the couch.

"It's probably money again," said Tom. "I know it's the end of the month and all the bills are coming in."

"Could we do something to cheer her up?" asked Cindy. "You know Mom's been threatening to send her (she pointed to me) back if she didn't fit in the family or was too expensive."

There was nothing I could say to this. I hung my head.

Tom put his arm around me. "Don't worry, old girl. We'll make sure you stay."

I leaned against the solid comfort of his shoulder.

"I know," Cindy said. "Let's bake cookies for Mom. It will be a treat for her. She's always saying the ones in the store are too expensive."

"Good idea, Sis," Kevin answered. "Come on. Maybe we can find some mixes. We'll have to hurry. She'll be home soon."

In the kitchen we hunted for bowls, cookie mix, chocolate chips, measuring cups and all the other necessary materials.

"Don't use that bowl," Tom warned Kevin. "That's Mom's favorite."

"Don't worry. I'll be careful," Kevin answered.

"I'll light the oven," Cindy said. "What temperature?"

Kevin had the batter in the large bowl and was mixing it with the electric mixer. Tom was cleaning the utensils they had used to do the measuring. Cindy went to help him dry them and put them away.

"This is delicious," Kevin said. "Here, Tom, Cindy, have a taste." He turned off the mixer and offered a spoonful to Tom.

I reached up to get some, too and the worst happened! Mom's precious mixing bowl landed upside-down on the kitchen floor and broke into a hundred pieces.

"Oh, for crying out loud!" Kevin said. "Cindy, get her away. She'll be cut by glass. Get away yourself. Tom, give me a hand here."

Tom left his place at the sink. Cindy and I watched from the side as the boys started to clean up the mess on the floor. Suddenly Mom was there.

"What's going on here? Oh, not my good bowl! What on earth were you trying to do? Can't you children do anything without messing it up? That was an expensive bowl. I won't be able to replace it. I catch an early train home and this is what I find!"

Cindy and I snuck out the kitchen door and escaped most of the tirade. We went upstairs to Cindy's room and closed the door.

"I had to get you out of there," Cindy said to me. "If she had noticed you she might have decided you were to blame. We don't want you to be sent away."

The thought frightened me. I was here on probation. Would the boys tell? After all I was the one who knocked the bowl out of Kevin's hands. Would Kevin tell on me? Would that mean I had to go back to the home?

I hated it at the home. I would wait there for people to come and see me. Sometimes no one came. Sometimes they just looked at me and left. Sometimes they would stand there and talk at me or about me as if I were some kind of idiot. I would try to be friendly. I would smile, but my heart was not usually in it.

I looked at Cindy. She and her brothers were sure lucky. They would not be sent away. They belonged here. I wished I belonged here, too. I sighed. Cindy put her arm around me. We listened to the sounds from downstairs. We heard Mom's high heels cross the hall from the kitchen to the den. We heard the den door close. I looked at Cindy and Cindy looked at me. We knew we had to act now.

"Come on," said Cindy, softly. "We'll tell Mom we're sorry."

We crept downstairs and over to the kitchen door. The boys were almost through cleaning up.

"Is Mom in the den?" asked Cindy.

"Yes," said Kevin, picking up splattered pieces of the bowl.

"We're going to tell Mom we're sorry," said Cindy.

The boys put down their tools and followed us across the hall.

"We've got to make sure you stay, old girl," said Tom to me.

I smiled up at him. It gave me a warm, secure feeling to know they loved me and wanted me to stay; but it was up to Mom. I hoped she would forgive me for knocking over her mixing bowl. I'd make it up to her every way I knew how.

Cindy, in the lead, opened the door to the den. There was no sound in the room.

Mom was sitting in a corner of the sofa. Her elbows were resting on her knees and her hands were clasped in front of her. She was staring at the floor. She held her position, but looked up, as we tiptoed in.

Cindy went into the room quietly, up to Mom, sat down beside her and snuggled. Tom sat on a stool beside the sofa. Kevin and I sat on the floor in front of her.

There was a long silence. Mom seemed to be trying to control her breathing. I stayed very quiet. I did not want to draw attention to myself.

Finally, Cindy spoke. "We're sorry, Mom. We didn't mean to break the bowl. We were making cookies to surprise you. You seemed unhappy this morning. We wanted to cheer you up."

Mom twisted her long fingers together and sighed. "I'm sorry, too," she said. "I've had some hard decisions to make at work and I'm taking out my anger on you."

"What kind of hard decisions?" asked Kevin.

"Oh, hiring and firing people. Our company is not making enough money to be able to keep someone on the payroll if he's not doing his job. I had to fire a man this morning. It's a job I hate to do."

"Was he doing a good job?" asked Tommy.

"No. That's the whole idea. He was always late to work, and he never seemed to be doing his job when he was there. I guess he didn't like to work. I fired him this morning and hired someone this afternoon.

"How did he take his firing?" Tommy asked.

"Oh he was angry at first. Then he was sorry. He promised to try to do better. He wouldn't. He's had lots of warnings. It's always a bad time when you fire someone."

Mom looked so sad I couldn't resist trying to cheer her up. I left Kevin's side and went over to the couch. I sat beside Mom and reached for her hand. Mom patted my arm absentmindedly.

"Does that mean she can stay?" Cindy asked, pointing to me.

"Of course she can stay," Mom laughed. "Were you worried that I'd send her back? Oh. I'm sorry. No. Never. You're part of the family now, old girl. You won't get sent away."

"Whoopee," the boys shouted, while Cindy gave me a big hug.

I was beside myself with joy. I was here! I was home! I was part of the family. Cindy and I danced around and I barked and wagged my tail until Mom said it would probably fall off.

Abigail M. Walsh

Grandpa's Glass Eye

I was seven years old, I remember it well.

We lived in Little Rock, high on a hill.

My brother, I, my Grandpa and Ma.

I was always amazed by things I saw.

Gramps had a glass eye that he could clean.

The strangest thing that I'd ever seen!

He'd pop it out and into his hand.

I thought it was great, I thought it was grand!

I even tried to take out mine,

But couldn't do it at any time.

Gramps could even take out his teeth.

I thought his tricks were really neat!

I asked Gramps, "How'd ya get that eye?"

He said, "From war," but I wondered why?

He said he got it for giving war his own.

I thought it must have been on loan.

Boy, war must have needed extra eyes to see.

Grandpa gave his, what more could war need?

It was nice of war to give Gramps back a glass eye,

But I wondered what war gave men back to die?

Though Grandpa is gone now, and I'm thirty-eight;

I'll always think his glass eye was great.

He used it to make me laugh as a child.

He gave war his eye, and gave me a smile!

Carolyn Richter

A Song For Ellen

Ellen, your face is all aglow

As the cold bitter wind gnaws at your cheeks

Snow engulfs you from your head to your feet

You're unable to discern the ground below

Snowflakes fill the evening sky

As peppermint schnapps eases pass your lips

Reality and fantasy begins to flip

Your cabin disappears from sight

Only the ageless pines are in sight

As wayward winds waltz with the snow

Eerie moans through your mind blow

No longer serene is the Michigan night

The surface of the frozen lake is black

As it shields its life from view

Life the fish safely pursue

For no one is there for them to attract

A newborn fire eases the cold winds' nip

As the sound of the songs of owls in the quills

And the sweet aroma of trout on the grill

Release you from the schnapps tight grip

Ellen, you glow

As an inspiration to honestly believe

Dreams can be achieved

Ellen, your beauty surpasses all heavenly shows

Daniel F. Landers



Photograph by Al Janssen

The Kill

*In the clear waters
Of Northern Alaska,
Swim the Bowhead Whales —
Large grey masses
Of tranquility
Drifting between
Floating ice mountains.*

*Louder and louder
Songs of magic
Come from Eskimo lips,
Handed down
From generations past.
They say the song
Slows the whale.*

*Boats and their crews arrive,
Silver spears glaring.
Blood seeps
Into pure white snow.
Their hunt is over —
Only icy silence remains.*

Donna Strabavy

Return

*When I said I would not stand
again where dunes and sea,
And wind and moving sand
caught me up in fantasy,
I thought I had outgrown
a hilltop wind's embrace;
And sea mist kisses blown
across my willing face.
Now I return and feel
reunion with the land,
Where nature's moods reveal
their images in sand;
And hills invade the atmosphere,
in scattered peaks wind has sown,
Each rising like a giant seer
telling where the wind has blown.
And now I climb where nature laced
her magic through the hills, lined
Her artistry in sand, and traced
indelible copies on my mind.*

Dorothy Stuart Swenson



Photograph by Al Janssen

The Diamond in the Oak

The sun was warm and gentle, spreading light on the earth below.
And along the path I wandered, not knowing where I would go.

The daisies danced in the wind and the brook flowed slowly along.
The clouds decorated the sky which was filled with a robin's song.

And my heart was content and familiar with the sights which lay near.
'Twas long ago in childhood that I had been here.

The world of the path and brook had been mine to love.
And so had the lovely flowers and the beautiful sky above.

But my destiny was not planned so that I could stay there near the flowers.
Life beckoned me onward separating us with long empty hours.

And when the grayness of the streets had finally taken over my dreams.
I returned to this cherished place to see the yellows and blues and greens.

But in the endless time that I'd been gone, my heart was always there.
And now I went back again to dwell in the fresh air.

The path twisted and turned and my favorite place was near.
An old wind blown oak, next to the water so clear.

That old oak had sheltered me and held me from despair.
I looked at it with love, then noticed that someone else had been there.

Upon its majestic trunk was a carving I'd never seen before.
Letters inside a diamond read "Love Forever More."

Who were the strangers who changed the place I loved?
Who told them to carve the diamond sheltered by the branches above?

Were they lovers or were they friends? Why had they come to my place?
My heart gave a whimper, and I sighed, and turned away my face.

It had been shared by two people, probably in love, who would return someday.
As I had returned to see it once more, in turn, so would they.

I shut my eyes and heard a voice, though no one ever spoke.
I turned down the path and left the diamond in the oak.

Kathy Nimmer

He is Gone

Today I looked for him
And he was gone
Torturous thoughts filled my mind
In despair, I cried
He is gone

He who could paint me rainbows
And give sustenance to my life
Is not where I expected him to be
And I am alone again
He is gone

Will my heart keep hungering
As each day I search and never find
He who brought me sunshine and laughter
And put music back into my life
He is gone

Even though I tell myself
Someday I will find him again
I know that I must travel my roads
Alone
He is gone

Gone like the wind rustling
Through evergreen boughs
Gone like rain washing
Down a mountain slope
He is gone

Virginia A. DeWeese

Turnabout

We left our table
And our warm idle prattle
Behind.

We stepped outside,
Quiet, yet together.
We tread on leaves
Of rain-soaked oak.

Suddenly, I slipped.
His steady arm
Stopped my fall.

We stood, silent then,
We watched the full yellow moon
As great gray clouds
Puffed their way across it.

In the damp silence
His arm cradled me close:
"What's wrong?"

He knew.
He was part of me.
He could feel the pain
I'd pretended wasn't there.

Tightening his arm,
He drew me close.
Letting go, I crumpled forward.

Fitting into the soft-hard nest
Between his shoulder and breast,
I rested there.

I heard his heartbeat.
I sensed my own
And we stayed
Locked together.

Wrapped against the cold, dark night.
I relished his comfort;
His refuge from fright.

He was a middle child—
This tender tenacious man—
Towering above me
As long ago, I had loomed above him.

Once, my baby—
Then, a rebel—
Now, a man—
Always, my son.

Judith Lee Birch



Photograph by Scott Kingery

Winter For All Ages

*Large snow flakes settle gently to the ground—
Angel feathers in the dust, falling constantly many hours,
Covering artifact and feature with a cold, white comforter,
Laying the earth to sleep for a season.*

*The cold pinches toes and cheeks.
It crunches squeekily underfoot.
Coming home from school, we smell the heady aroma
Of roasting pork and baking apples
Like coon hounds on the scent.
They tantalize and beckon us home.
The baking apples match homecomers' cheeks.*

*No time for well-fed drowsiness
When coal-fired warmth
Sparks an eagerness to be out and doing.
On a weekend, old and young respond
To a bright, midday sun,
Retiring indoors only at last light,
Puffing from exercise, and voraciously hungry.*

*Cheery lamplight in valley and plain,
Chimneys' sooty plumes,
Merriment and good cheer within
While children and pets sleep in their rooms.
Friends and neighbors gather with good will,
And winter's snow and cold collaborate.*

Henry White

Poem Remembering

*She remembers songs
she never could sing;
music the wind would recite;
the rhythm of blue cattails
moving in a purple night;
And the lilt of a yellow bird
waking from dreams in the rain,
voicing the same soft aria
over and over again.*

*She remembers
unfinished songs of youth,
without words of her own, timed
to the beat of new magic,
singing inside her mind.*

Dorothy Stuart Swenson



Photograph by Karen Luksich

I recently moved to a new home with my husband and two children and thereby acquired a large swimming pool that was situated in the backyard. I could hardly contain myself in anticipation of the upcoming summer's pool parties. But seeing as how it was only November, I first had a long winter to survive.

After performing the usual amenities involved in settling into a new home, I began to explore my new territory. Being a devoted mother, I enthusiastically seated my daughter on the center boards of our Huffy Champion sled, threaded on some rope, and headed for the backyard. I trudged through the tundra of powder snow that had fallen the previous day, listening to my first-born's squeals of delight and occasionally stealing a glimpse of the twenty-seven foot oval lying therein. When I finally ran out of energy, we pulled down the ladder on the pool, which was always kept locked, and climbed up onto the icy deck to just sit and gaze at the pool. Even though it was completely covered and secured for winter weather, we both derived so much pleasure from just looking, dreaming, wondering. The neighbors must have thought we both had screws loose.

Since none of our friends owned swimming pools, they all shared in our joy and anticipation. We spent hours together planning parties, barbeques by the pool, and suntans—all the while sipping hot cocoa. It would indeed be a long winter. I remember feeling a bit like a middle class Beverly Hillbilly—you know—"swimming pools, movie stars." It was great.

By the time spring finally sprang, I was biting my nails. Could I ever survive another three months? I decided that the only way to subsist would be to begin preparation.

Since I knew absolutely nothing about this monstrous body of water, I began to research. The previous owners had left us a pamphlet with information on summerizing and winterizing the pool and filter. I read it slowly, ever so slowly, cover to cover, only to realize that it made no sense whatsoever. It was written in swimmerese, your basic language for pool owners who just happened to be nuclear physicists. I was panic stricken. All my summer fantasies would remain just that.

Determined to rise above, I began phoning swimming pool dealers in the area, one after another. Finally, I came across one who actually spoke common English. She kindly told me to come right over and pick up all the information I would need. She was truly a godsend.

From that moment on I displayed no less than sheer brilliance. The combination of my new reading material and my husband's mechanical mind permitted the filter to breathe its annual first breath. It sputtered and resisted the awakening, then reluctantly began to hum. We discovered things called *algaecide*, *diatomite*, and *p.h. plus and minus*. We had stumbled onto a vast array of new techniques, like an unquelled island welcoming its founders. We were children with a fascinating new toy.

April showers had come and gone and with them, cooler temperatures. My thermometer read twenty-five degrees celsius. The fateful day had arrived.

With the hands of a surgeon, I delicately removed the solar cover. Making sure that there was at least one neighbor in view, I tested the chlorine and *p.h.* levels with collegiate authority. Finding them perfect, all systems were go. Now the final four hour countdown could begin as that was when the children would bless me with a delectable two-hour nap and I could christen the pool at my leisure.

The ensuing four hours were comparable to four spent in my dentist's waiting room. But I did manage to endure. The kids willingly succumbed to the sandman, having no notion of the intriguing thoughts preoccupying mom's head. It was time.

I dashed to my room and slipped into my most chic swimwear. Then I strolled onto the deck, the epitome of nonchalance. The warm summer sun, combined with the excitement gave me momentary goose-flesh.

Deciding that this experience was meant to overload my senses, I closed my eyes. I stood up and, envisioning the grace of a swan, took two precisely measured steps and leapt into the air toward the water. It seemed in slow motion. As my flawless dive came to the peak of its arc, I heard my husband's voice as he stepped outside—probably to spectate at the grand event. But what was he saying. . . . He drained the pool in order to repair the leak. . . .

Cindy Wrona

Something For My Lady

In your genes you carry traces of me
Beyond the telescopes of the earth-ape
We were combined to walk into and out of each other

*

Now you guess who I am
Intimate sororal searchers could not tell you
With their crystal balls
That we have been searching
Before the sun-dial
Sent us out to mark time

*

And when we are cloned upon each other
I crawl through the rainbows of your charged veins
Seeking to re-establish me

*

On Terra they call it love
A word still grey to us
Still you pale, frightened by the rush of me
Fearing annihilation
For they have told you it was foul
But that what I seek to do
Is to come back into you
Re-charge our powers
Become again celestial flowers..

*

In my early visions when child-sleep closed my eyes
You visited me
I knew you existed some where
On this star
And that haunted me
Knowing I was only half-free

*

Now you know
Who we are
Victims from another star
Wanting to go home

Bel Angelo



John F. Fleming

Onward Great Stream

In life I am swept away
Like a drying leaf I cannot stay
Into a river I have fallen
And my fate the sea is calling
Onward great stream

On with my dream

To a rock I cling and fight the flow
But the call is great for me to go
In mothers arms I shall not be
The child has gone to find the sea
Onward great stream

On with my dream

Soaked with life the leaves go by
Some sink beneath I reach for sky
In mirky depths the dreamless lay
Faced with death as the children play...
Onward great stream

On with my dream

Cruel is the current when the river is low
No time for indecision on with the show
I have no intention I have no end
My future is always around the bend
Onward great stream

On with my dream

When the leaden clouds turn to rain
The river will rise to ease the pain
All time is present in quiet reflection
All time will pass I know my direction
Onward great stream

On with my dream

Behold— Before me now all my fears
The ocean made of all my tears
I follow my dream in to the sea
I am a leaf
I am a tree
Onward great stream

On with my dream

Don Juan

The Mind is Snow

*It is night and the mind is snow
Drifting through the shadows of time
The amoeba has come and gone
While weeping Aquarius now desert
Prays for rain*

*Now dark holes gather in the sky
As the Great Hen, sucking her eggs of prey
Akin to some giant weasel prowling in the dark of day
Phantom in white, great imitator
Hisses silently, her cavernous mouth drawing—
Dredging sand and stone—milk and bone
For it is night and the mind is snow*

*And the Great Illumination
The Prayer
Decaying on skin-peeled lips
On rotted teeth
Geysers its last sprig of sanity
As man lays down his dreams..*

*When I was a lad I often watched the milk-weed's seed
Bourne on a fluff of white
Imitating Icarus
My eyes knew its destination..*

*Now I am not sure
If my father wound my dizzying spring
Or if the Hazel Sun rising from the east
Sleeps on a tottered compass-point
I am not sure no more of anything
It is night and the mind is snow. . .*

Bel Angelo

*Deliver us, Lord, in every way
From those who strive to cloud each day
With storms of violence, pain, and tears
That work to worsen lonely years.
Deliver us, Lord, from those who try
To take without a reason why
Rewards we earn through work and toil
By tax on water, home, and soil.
Deliver us, Lord, from being old and weak
And causing thus the aid to seek
Of those in power, who buy and sell
The rights of man we know so well.
Deliver us, Lord, from political games
By men of long and pompous names
Who perplex our sense and drive us mad
From wishing for what they have had.
Deliver us, Lord, from those who think
Of progress and the missing link
And make their weapons to destroy
The natural peace of girl and boy.
Deliver us, Lord, from all that pains;
From all with ill-begotten gains;
From anything which mars the state
Of happiness we cultivate.
Deliver us, Lord, from earthly woes,
Make for us friends from ardent foes,
Lead us in the end to peace,
And cause the endless wars to cease.
Deliver us, Lord, to life again
And judge not harshly at the end,
For though mankind is prone to err,
Be generous, Lord; forgive us there.*

Kerri-Ellen Kelley

